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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Budget of 1927 interprets faithfully what we are coming to regard as the accepted canons of Churchillian finance. It is characterized by the usual note of optimism, if not of confidence; it conveys, superficially, the impression of exceptional difficulties miraculously overcome; and it has, as in 1925, the appearance of a lavish distribution of Easter gifts—something acceptable for everybody. For the economizers there is the promised abolition of three Ministries; for upholders of the Colwyn Report, a handsome addition to the Sinking Fund; for protectionists, a couple of brand-new duties; for the F.B.I., an ostentatious avoidance of new direct taxation. Only the working man gets nothing—indeed, his tobacco and his matches are to cost him a little more. But this is

the only flaw in an otherwise artistic conception. How far the Budget will stand criticism and detailed examination is quite another matter; we suggest elsewhere along what lines such criticism may develop.

* * *

The final estimate of this year's expenditure, assuming for the moment a Sinking Fund of £50 millions, is £818.4 millions—which is less by £2.3 millions than the (original) estimate for 1926-7. That estimate, however, included provision for a £60 million Sinking Fund, so that there is in fact a £7.7 million increase in expenditure, other than debt repayment, to be budgeted for. Receipts, on the basis of existing taxation, are estimated at £796.8 millions. Mr. Churchill is faced, therefore, with a deficit of £21.6 millions. But he needs to do more than close this gap—he has to disembarass himself of a reputation for improvidence and bad finance acquired in the course of his sensational raids on the Sinking Fund. His solution of this twofold problem is characteristic. He proposes new taxation—though, as we explain below, taxation is hardly the right name for most of it—to the tune of £26.0 millions, and he coolly annexes £12.0 millions from the Road Fund reserve. The £38.0 millions thus acquired gives him a prospective surplus of no less than £16.4 millions. Of this, £15 millions is to be added to the Sinking Fund, which thus, at £65 millions, assumes quite respectable dimensions, and there is still an apparent surplus of £1.4 millions. The balance-sheet so framed presents an encouraging appearance—it does not, however, take any account of Shanghai. If the Budget calculations are correct, a deficit at the end of the year is almost inevitable.

* * *

What are the "tax changes" which are to yield this impressive total of £26.0 millions new revenue? The two most important can best be described as "wangles"; they represent recourse to accounting expedients which cannot, unfortunately, be made use of a second time. The revenue from income tax, Schedule A, is to be paid in one instalment instead of two, which means that £14.8 millions payable, as things now stand, in the fiscal year 1928-9, will be collected in the present one. The process of anticipation must then be repeated year by year in perpetuity. There is, it would seem, no great injustice in this expedient—indeed, it involves no more than the withdrawal of a concession made during the war. Similar in character is the further reduction of the credit period allowed to brewers in connection with the Excise on beer; £5.0 millions of money which would not otherwise have reached the Exchequer until after the close of the fiscal year are to be drawn on in this way. The effect of these proposals, ingenious as they are, is to suggest that Mr. Churchill is relying largely on the methods of Mr. Micawber—fortified, as the raid on the Road Fund

indicates, by those of Mr. Sikes. (The resemblance to Mr. Micawber must be very striking, for it has been noticed before by our contributor "Peter Ibbetson," and we reverted to it before we saw that Mr. Snowden and others had done so.) Only £6.2 millions this year (or £7.5 millions in a full year) is to be honestly raised by new taxation. From one point of view this fact is agreeable to contemplate, yet it is in itself a criticism of the Budget.

As for the taxes themselves, they are a poorish lot. The most important of them fiscally is the increase in the tobacco duty—8d. per lb. on unmanufactured tobacco. This, it is estimated, will bring in about £8 millions a year. Matches are to be further taxed to the tune of £400,000 or so. Wines, as has long been anticipated, are to bear a heavier duty, a substantial rate of preference being accorded to Empire products; £1.5 millions annually are expected from this source. There is a new "safeguarding" duty—on china; and a new "McKenna" duty—on tyres. These are to bring in about £200,000 and £750,000 respectively. Unimportant in themselves, they continue the process of building up a protective tariff, which has already gone further than was adumbrated when the Government took office. And there are some administrative changes in direct taxation which on balance will add, in a full year, about £1 million to the revenue. Among these is a concession of some importance—the granting to educational institutions of relief from income tax upon "trading profits." We drew attention a fortnight ago to the desirability of this change. Steps are also to be taken—some of them long overdue—to render the business of tax-dodging a little more precarious than it is; "the Channel Islands," we learn, "have been invited to co-operate." The one-man company, openly designed to circumvent the payment of death duties, also appears to be doomed.

Finally, there is Mr. Churchill's programme of economies. We doubt if he takes this very seriously; it is not likely to have the backing either of his sympathy or of his intellectual convictions. The projected abolition of three Ministries—the Ministry of Transport, the Mines Department, and the Department of Overseas Trade—is spectacular enough, and on the face of it looks like business. And the three gentlemen for whom tumbrils are designated can no doubt be spared. But what is the salary of a departmental chief or two in relation to an £800 millions expenditure, and where, save in respect of a few salaries, is there likely to be retrenchment? The business of the threatened Ministries has still to be carried on—the various Acts relating to coal mines, the Railways Act, and so forth, must still be worked; the Road Fund must still be administered, unless indeed Mr. Churchill takes it all. As for the Department of Overseas Trade, it is, we believe, performing useful functions, and there is likely to be some demand for its continuance from Mr. Churchill's own supporters. If we are really on the verge of a trade revival, the more intelligent plan would seem to be to strengthen it.

Sir John Simon and Lord Grey have both written letters to the *Times* during the past week on the subject of the Trade Unions Bill. Sir John Simon's letter was mainly interrogatory. Why, he asked, if a strike is illegal because it is designed to coerce the Government or to intimidate the community, is a lock-out, designed for the same purpose, not equally illegal? If the test of illegality depends on whether a strike (a) aims at more than the furtherance of a trade dispute within the

strikers' trade or industry or (b) is designed or calculated to coerce the Government, &c., is not the first condition likely to provide a fresh incentive to wider amalgamations? Sir John Simon asks these pertinent questions because,

"when draftsmen sit down to formulate general propositions, difficulties emerge, and it is no good introducing legislation to declare the law if more obscurities and difficulties are thereby occasioned. And if the Government Bill, however well-intentioned, could be plausibly suspected of dealing with wage-earners while leaving employers alone, its effect upon the campaign for industrial peace would be simply disastrous."

In our judgment the whole Bill is a most serious menace to industrial peace, and the formal inclusion of employers' organizations in Clause 1 would make little real difference to its character.

Lord Grey's admirable letter goes straight to the root of the matter. After the troubles of last year, there has been a reversion to reason. "An extremist leadership had been discredited. The advocacy of class war was flagging or failing in effect. Things that grow in an atmosphere of reason were making progress":—

"The policy of the Government will check all this and will give an impulse to things such as class war, which thrive in an atmosphere of passion. . . . The policy of the Government has turned opponents into allies of extremism, and the more severe the struggle over the Trade Unions Bill the more difficult it will be for the moderates to disentangle themselves again from the extremists. It can hardly be denied that these are the consequences of the Trade Unions Bill."

On the other hand, Lord Grey asks what is going to be gained by the Bill? "High authorities declare that a general strike is already illegal. The Bill will confirm that, but a general strike is an attempt to override law," and "direct action to coerce the community can be met only by direct action on the part of the community":—

"If these views are well founded," concludes Lord Grey, "there will soon be a general recognition that the introduction of this Trade Unions Bill has been a huge mistake. It is not easy to see how the Government and the country can get out of the mess unless it be by the troublesome method of a General Election, but the first step is to recognize definitely that the mistake has been made, how great is the magnitude of it, and how disastrous the consequences may be."

Lord Grey has rendered a great public service by this plain speaking.

The Note which the Powers have presented to the Cantonese authorities is a summary of the statements and charges which have been published in the House and elsewhere. The Chinese have never attempted to make a serious rebuttal statement, and we may safely assume that the Consular reports, upon which the Note is based are accurate. Our claim to compensation and satisfaction is irrefutable; but we could wish that our manner of enforcing it were better described. In the debate in the House the Foreign Secretary stated that the Government had no intention whatsoever of departing from the policy of the Memorandum; in the last paragraph of the explanatory statement attached to the Note, the Powers make a solemn assurance that their demands for satisfaction are "not made in derogation of the sovereignty or dignity of the Chinese people." None the less, the Powers actually threaten to "take such measures as they consider appropriate" if their demands are not promptly complied with. These words are a clearly expressed threat of coercion, and, in our opinion, they might have been omitted with advantage.

The most casual glance at the Chinese situation, which grows more confused from day to day, ought to show how dangerous it may be to exercise any kind of pressure upon the unstable organization of the Canton Government. Chiang Kai-shek has practically declared war upon the extreme elements of his party; and his troops have been defeated north of the Yang-tze. The outcome of his domestic and external struggle is quite uncertain, and it is a matter of practical common sense that before coercion is attempted there must be some authority to coerce. For the moment it is difficult to say that any section of the Cantonese Government, military or civil, is sufficiently distinct to feel pressure from the outside; and unless these appropriate measures contemplated by the Powers strike directly at those responsible for the outrages complained of they will appropriate only as incitements to further disorder. As it is quite impossible to devise coercive measures with so limited an objective, it would have been a thousand times better to have placed our demands for satisfaction before the Cantonese, and to have awaited their reply.

It is no consolation to learn that the Soviet Government seem likely to become officially engaged in the imbroglio by their quarrel with Chang Tso-lin. They have presented a strong note of protest about the Legation raid; and have recalled their Chargé d'Affaires; but have added that in contrast to the "foreign Imperialists" who are making a tool of Chang they will not exert any coercion upon the Canton Government. They conclude, however, that they will continue to work in the interests of the toiling masses of "the Chinese people." Chang Tso-lin will not get much comfort out of the Soviet's professions of moderation. A large proportion of the toiling masses of Manchuria are well-armed, well-mounted men called Tung Tuses; they have an extraordinary talent for raiding military communications and looting military depôts, and are faithful to their paymasters. The Russians know them well. The remainder of the toiling masses of Manchuria are presumably as good at mob violence as the toiling masses further south. The implications of the Soviet Note, as Chang will read them, are that the Moscow Government threatens to become the avowed official patron of all who are prepared to subvert his dictatorship.

The Government are again in difficulties over their pledges. The latest trouble has arisen in connection with the proposed extension of the franchise to women on equal terms with men. In October, 1924, Mr. Baldwin said:—

"The Unionist Party is in favour of equal political rights for men and women, and desires that the question of an extension of the franchise should, if possible, be settled by agreement. With this in view they would, if returned to power, propose that the matter be referred to a conference of all political parties, on the lines of the Ulswater Committee."

In 1925, however, Sir William Joynson-Hicks declared that:—

"The pledge is for equal rights, and at the next election. I will say quite definitely that means that no difference will take place in the ages at which men and women will go to the poll at the next election."

The all-party conference has never been summoned, but a Cabinet Committee is said to have reported in favour of votes for all at twenty-one. This has caused alarm in certain sections of the Tory Party, and given rise to a demand for a fulfilment of Mr. Baldwin's pledge. The Government are in a cleft stick, for it would be virtually impossible for a conference to report in time

for its findings to take effect at the next election. They have thus been driven to brave the anger of the Die-Hards and take the plunge for full enfranchisement.

The case of Bovis, Ltd., v. Thorne and others, which was concluded last week after a lengthy hearing, was one of considerable interest. The defendants were officers of the London Master Builders' Association, an employers' trade union; the plaintiffs' firm, at one time members of the Association, had withdrawn from it, on the ground that they had not been fairly treated. The Association subsequently distributed to some hundreds of persons interested in building contracts a statement that the plaintiffs were in "wage-rate default." This, it appeared, was not intended to imply that Bovis, Ltd., had failed to honour their obligations, but merely that they had refused to sign an agreement as to the rate of wages they would pay. One of their offences, apparently, was the payment to some workers of wages above the standard rates. The plaintiffs, in other words, were "black-listed," to the detriment of their business. The action was one for libel, the phrase complained of being that quoted above, and a defence of privilege was set up which was partially successful. Most of the occasions on which the libels were published were ruled to have been privileged, and, the rebutting plea of malice failing, damages were only awarded to the plaintiff in respect of the remainder.

The layman, however, will be interested, not in these technical issues, but in the vivid light which the case throws on the status and powers of employers' trade unions. At a time when combinations of wage-earners are confronted by an attack of unprecedented violence, it is important to realize how powerful, how unscrupulous, and how selfish associations of employers can be. They are as fully protected as are the registered trade unions of wage-earners by the privileges of the Trade Disputes Act; their methods—black lists, "stop lists," and various forms of threats and intimidation—are not less anti-social than those which organized labour is so often alleged to employ, and the fact that they can usually work in the dark, while wage-earners have always to organize openly, gives them advantages of which notoriously they are not slow to avail themselves.

Though the prowess of Sir William Joynson-Hicks in "driving the Reds away" has been celebrated in song, he seems to have been deplorably weak in his dealings with taxicab-owners. A reduction in fares has at last been announced. The revised charges will be sixpence for the first two-thirds of a mile, threepence for each additional third, and four shillings an hour for waiting. From May 1st until the necessary alterations are made in the taximeters, the charges will be approximately three-quarters of the present fares. These reductions are long overdue. But the weakness of the Home Secretary has been most conspicuously shown by his treatment of the question of two-seater taxis. These have been used throughout as a bargaining threat, and the order issued a few months ago for their registration has now been revoked. Anyone who wishes to work a two-seater must, apparently, conform to the new scale of charges for four-seaters. This is an unjustifiable concession to vested interests. The public demand for taxis is, very largely, a demand for two seats; and it is admitted that this can be met more cheaply by two-seater cabs. It is outrageous that the obstructive tactics of existing taxi-cab interests should be allowed to prevail against so clear a public need.

MR. CHURCHILL'S INGENUITY

TO grasp the significance of Mr. Churchill's finance, it is necessary to consider it as a whole. The ingenious Budget which was so skilfully introduced on Monday bears a strong family likeness to its predecessors, and it is only by casting our minds back over the past two years that we can hope to determine the direction in which the Chancellor is travelling. In the new Budget there is a sop to the Protectionists—the tiresome duty on translucent pottery, and the inclusion of motor tyres in the McKenna duties—as in 1925. A sop to the advocates of “economy”—in the proposed abolition of three Government departments—as in 1926. A sop to the City and the financial purists—in the increased Sinking Fund—which has been a feature of each of Mr. Churchill's previous Budgets but has not yet materialized. The Road Fund is again raided; this time to the tune of £12 millions, the whole remaining surplus. The credit of the brewers is again curtailed. There is increased indirect taxation, on tobacco; wines, and matches. And, in addition, there is a most ingenious device for getting three half-yearly instalments of property tax in one financial year, from which Mr. Churchill will derive not only revenue but legitimate glee. This last device is the only one which involves the smallest sacrifice by the direct taxpayer, who was the main beneficiary of the Budget of 1925.

In this tenderness to the income and super tax payer we shall find the clue to Mr. Churchill's finance. It is the one clear thread which can be found running through the tangled skein of his three Budgets; the one coherent purpose in a medley of tricks and dodges for raising revenue. “I myself have remitted, on balance, £35 millions of direct taxation,” said Mr. Churchill on Monday, but he did not point out that this amount was nearly equal to the total deficit in 1926 and almost exactly the sum required to balance his Budget in the coming year. The truth is, as we pointed out at the time, that Mr. Churchill was reckless and improvident in giving this relief to the direct taxpayer when he was embarking simultaneously on a hazardous return to the gold standard and an ambitious scheme of social insurance. He will say, of course, that he has been unlucky; that no man could foresee the disastrous labour troubles of the past year, and that his financial programme would have worked out satisfactorily if the coal stoppage had not occurred. Mr. Micawber frequently complained of similar ill-luck. The question is whether reasonable prevision was displayed; whether the consequences of a return to gold were duly weighed before that ir retrievable step was taken; and, if so, what precautions were adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ensure that the national finances would be in the strongest condition to withstand the strain of the transition period. We will not weary our readers by tracing again the chain of causation from the return to gold to last year's coal stoppage and thence to this year's Budget. It is only necessary to recall that the links between these events are clearly established, and that the Chancellor was

repeatedly warned to expect such consequences from his monetary policy. We may be thankful that they are no worse:—

“Surveying the scene as a whole,” said Mr. Churchill, “it must be said that our loss, though grievous, is incomparably less, and that the resiliency and resources of Britain, though stricken, are incomparably greater than anyone a year ago would have dared to predict.”

A year ago, by the way, Mr. Churchill was presenting a Budget based on the assumption that no coal stoppage would occur. No doubt he meant to say six or nine months ago, and to that there will be general assent.

It would be possible, no doubt, to agree that the remission of direct taxation in 1925 was ill-judged, and at the same time to accept Mr. Churchill's excuses for not reimposing it this year. It is always easier to retain taxes than to put them on again when once they have been repealed. Four shillings is a more convenient figure for income tax than four-and-sixpence, and the income tax payer would feel very aggrieved if it rose again to the higher figure. These are relevant but inconclusive considerations. We are less impressed by those which Mr. Churchill advanced:—

“Sixpence on the income tax,” he said, “would give me all that I require for this year, but it would give us much more than we require for next year. Income tax is visibly bending under the strain of recent years. The emergency with which we are confronted is one which will be greatly diminished next year. . . . I have thought it my duty to find some means whereby the revenues of this year could be sustained without unduly burdening the future, and without throwing a tax on the country which would hurt and injure industry and trade.”

Much of this is the purest clap-trap. It is meaningless to talk of income tax “visibly bending under the strain,” as though people were fast giving up incomes rather than pay the tax upon them; and no cry has been more foolishly exaggerated than that of the injury done to industry by the income tax, as the Colwyn Committee has recently testified. There is substance, however, in Mr. Churchill's plea that, if he can tide over this year by the exercise of his financial ingenuity, the position next year will be far easier, and that he therefore does not need a large permanent increase in taxation. This is certainly true up to a point. Barring accidents, in China or elsewhere, next year's Budget will have a very different complexion from this year's. The effects of the coal stoppage will have worked themselves out, and the change in the method of assessing income-tax will begin to benefit the Exchequer instead of injuring it. But these considerations do not, in our judgment, warrant Mr. Churchill in raising so large a proportion of his revenue by one-year expedients; still less do they justify the imposition of further indirect taxation. Let us glance at the figures.

By various devices, it is proposed to sweep into the Treasury this year about £38 millions additional revenue. Of this sum about £6 millions is to be obtained from *bona-fide* taxation; about £20 millions from one-year expedients—an extra month's beer duty and an extra half-year's property tax; and £12 millions by seizing the surplus of the Road Fund. It is inconceivable that a Chancellor of the Exchequer who con-

templated a long tenure of office and could therefore take a long view of the nation's interests would solve his immediate problem in this way. The soundest course would have been to reimpose the direct taxes which were so light-heartedly repealed. This is perhaps a counsel of perfection politically impossible to Mr. Churchill because his party would not stand it. But at least he might have put back the super-tax to the figure at which he found it, and have refrained from raising the taxes on tobacco and matches. The more closely one examines his Budget, the more one sees that Mr. Churchill's ingenuity, which is very great, has overcome his judgment, which has never been so conspicuous.

We have made but a passing reference to the announcement that three Ministries—Mines, Transport, and Overseas Trade—are to be abolished, because we regard this as merely a window-dressing device, though it is likely enough to involve a sacrifice of efficiency to a pretence of economy. As for the scheme by which the Sinking Fund is swollen, on paper, by annexing the Road Fund surplus—there Mr. Churchill's ingenuity overreaches itself; the device is too transparent to deceive anyone.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF LIBERALISM

III.—A LIBERAL PROGRAMME FOR THE CONSUMER AND THE SALARIED WORKER

THE two preceding articles in this series have argued that Liberalism has, in these next two years, a real opportunity of revival if a programme translating its essential principle, the defence of the public interest, into practical measures can now be worked out, and have made certain suggestions for this programme in the sphere of industrial organization.

In this, as in other spheres, the Liberal Party, if it is to have life and strength, must, it has been urged, be a party of fearless and radical reform. It must be as critical of the present system and its injustices and inequalities as the Left; and it must be as eager to reconstruct. Only, its reconstruction must be based on a wider conception of the general interest. And if it is to have any chance of translating its policy into action it must clearly direct its appeal to forces and interests as strong and as obvious as those which form the basis of the other competing parties. The conception of the "public interest" is too abstract in itself as the basis of such a wide appeal. It must be more concretely expressed as the interest of the "consumer" in the widest sense. The appeal to the consumer and to the public in its aspect as consumer, is in line with the traditions of Liberalism; and it is a distinctive and appropriate appeal. It covers the greater part, though not the whole, of the public interest, and as an electoral appeal should be the stronger with woman suffrage. And there is one class of the community to which such a policy should appeal with special force: the salaried and professional worker of all grades. It is the salaried worker who has been crushed between the hammer and anvil of private interests and sectional interests. It is he who has been sacrificed in the alternating pressure and successes of the right and left. Monopolistic prices, the sheltering of favoured trades, disorganization and disputes in industry, the dead weight burden of the debt, have all reacted on his cost of living without compensation in his rate of salary. It is he who

has lost most by the abandonment of the public interest, and he who has most to gain by its renewed assertion. He has no natural affinity with a party of private interests or a party of class interests. He oscillates helplessly to right or left, under the impact of alternating blows from the one side or the other. He is to be won, in all his solid and perhaps decisive strength, by a party which in its consistent policy offers an escape from the injustices of the past. And the success of the new Liberal effort will depend, more than upon anything else, on its ability to persuade him that at last he has such a policy and such a party.

Such a policy as is here suggested, coupled with a real programme of Land Reform (and its attraction for the agricultural districts) and of Industrial reconstruction would thus have not only unity of idea but a broad and solid basis of strength. "Industrial Reconstruction, Land Reform and the Interests of the Consumer and the Salaried Worker" should give an appeal at once appropriate, distinctive, and effective.

The interest of the consumer means partly, as already suggested, that his protection against excessive prices should be a part of the industrial programme. But it means more than this. The industrial inquiry should be extended and pressed vigorously into the whole of the middleman and distributing system of the country, including the aspect of advertisement (whether in the Press, by posters, or in the form of expensive buildings, &c.). The results of an examination from the central point of view of the public, showing to what extent costs, expenses, and profits representing no real element of public service, raise prices, would be surprising, and in some cases revolutionary. A good starting-point for inquiry would be the retail price of each article of necessity as compared with the normal pre-war price, after taking into account the fall in the purchasing power of money which is reflected in the general index figure. Wherever the price of an article had increased by more than the proportion indicated in the general index figure there would be a *prima facie* case for inquiry whether there were special factors outside of those within the control of the industry and distributing trade concerned, or whether the extra prices were due to something in its internal organization involving either wasteful methods or semi-monopolistic exploitation. Very often such an inquiry would show that the latter was the real explanation, and sometimes certainly that the proportion of the final price which was going to the middleman had substantially increased.

The remedies here, too, would vary indefinitely; sometimes a full public service, with a monopoly; sometimes a public enterprise of limited extension (like the "Vilgrain" retail shops in Paris), limiting the possible range of private extortion by a new form of competition; sometimes the reports of a public authority like the Food Council. Liberalism has stood for the importance of private enterprise. It must make it clear that it does so only because private enterprise is in the public interest, and to the extent to which it is so. The test of Liberalism's sincerity in such a contention is clearly that it should modify its attitude on the principle of private enterprise where, through the disappearance of effective competition or other causes, its distinctive public advantage has disappeared or is so diminished as to be less important than other considerations.

It is obvious that the enmity of powerful interests would be aroused. But a constructive Liberalism cannot avoid this; it must rely on evoking the forces of the great consuming public and the salaried worker against them.

Nor should this process stop with trade. It should be pursued into the professions, though here, too, doubtless against strong opposition of the particular interests. I do not propose here to attempt to forecast in detail the results

of such a study. Merely as illustrations, I may suggest that it might result, *inter alia*, in the extension of public health services as compared with the private practitioner system, in the simplification and codification of law (*cf.*, the Birkenhead codification of the land laws) and the establishment of a Ministry of Justice, with the special task of securing a mechanism ensuring cheap and rapid justice. But these are only mentioned by way of suggesting a whole sphere of work. I will not attempt here to elaborate proposals.

The rigorous application of the criterion of the public interest would also turn the flank of other historic controversies, and offer an escape from the dilemma of their competing formulæ.

Take the capital levy, for instance. The justice (and economic advantage) of some such levy soon after the war scarcely admit of argument. The disadvantage of the more destructive forms of it now are equally obvious. But the more the question is examined, the clearer it is that any practical form of capital levy would be identical with an increased discrimination against unearned income. It is equally clear that such an increased discrimination is in accordance with the soundest principles of Liberal finance, and in particular that of "taxable capacity." If *A* has an income of £8,000 derived wholly from earnings, and *B* the same income, derived half from investments and half from earnings, the economic position and taxable capacity of *B* are incontestably higher. He is as to half his income free of the risks as to health, life, and continued personal market efficiency, whereas *A* has to insure or save against all. But they both pay exactly the same rate of tax.

Or take again the scandal of extravagant luxury in relation to the necessity of leaving untaxed a sufficient fund for saving and private investment. Industrial relations can never be permanently satisfactory while the spectacle of wanton extravagance continues and no effective efforts are being made to restrict it. It is useless to tell those who want money for increased pensions, for example, that the money is not available because it must be left by the taxation system free for saving and investment. If it is being spent on a private yacht it is not being saved. And the indirect results on employment are at least as advantageous if directed through taxation for expenditure by pensioners as if left to employ sailors. But at the same time there *must* be free money for saving and investment or the expanding working population (entailing, it has been calculated, £1,000 of expenditure per worker, before he can be prepared and equipped for earning) can never be absorbed. But is there no other way than leaving a mass of superfluous private income, all available at private caprice for wanton consumption, in order that the more prudent of those who have this opportunity will not use it but may save and invest? Some countries have tried as a remedy "luxury taxes," applied in detail to articles of luxury: a necessarily cumbrous, expensive, intricate, irritating and largely ineffective method. Is it not possible to apply the same principle, not in detail, but in gross? If the social justification of leaving a large private income after taxation is that it may be saved, why should it not be left free only on this condition? In other words, why should not taxation beyond a certain point approach 100 per cent. except as regards such income as is invested? (Investments or public benefactions in a past year relieving from a special "luxury" taxation an equivalent amount in a later year.)

What is evil, both economically and in its impression on the workers, is that large private incomes should be wastefully consumed. The above principle, coupled with increased death duties, designed ultimately to leave no more than enough to give the deceased's children a decent equipment for life, would leave the good and remove the evil.

There is an overwhelming presumption that a man, like Morris of Oxford, who has built an immense business by his own genius, lives simply and reinvests his profits, will dispose of his money more fruitfully if he invests than the State would. But if either he, or anyone else, devotes them to excessive consumption, the result is and must be worse than the alternative of State expenditure, whose results at the worst and most wasteful would achieve a greater result in human utility. It will, of course, be urged that such a system would stop effort and enterprise. A man would not make the effort, and take the risks, unless he could consume the profits. This is, I believe, wrong psychology—except for a transition period of sulks and political contention. What the man of enterprise, the only one worth encouraging, really values (even if he is not fully conscious of it) is his power and freedom not to consume, but to develop his business. This is the real reward of great success, and this would remain intact—nay, increased by the lightening of the general load of parasitic spenders.

Such, in brief and imperfect outline, is the course of action which would, I suggest, promise a new future for the Liberal forces of the country. No attempt has been made in these articles to traverse again the fields on which most work has already recently been done (proposals for land reform, for example); nor to extend the survey from domestic to foreign policy, which deserves its own special study. The suggestions here made are directed at the problems of the Liberal committees now at work. From these committees we may hope to secure a policy at once progressive and practicable, adaptable to the infinite variety of current problems, but throughout informed by Liberalism's single and central principle of the paramount claims of the public interest; including both industrial reconstruction and the reform of taxation; and making its appeal to all those who care most for the *res publica*, and have suffered most from its betrayals.

If such a policy could be elaborated, properly expanded both by report and in speeches, identified not with one or two political leaders but with a body of able men drawn from both within and without political life, presented to the public in a series of widely endorsed reports and on the platform—and, above all, expounded continuously by an army of candidates who set out to *win*—the latent and discouraged forces of Liberalism might well prove to be immensely stronger than any recent political calculations have imagined; and the Liberal Party, on the very eve of its apparent dissolution, might renew its ancient strength and aspire again at no distant date to the government of the country.

WATCHMAN.

A FIXED EASTER

By JOHN WITHERS, M.P.

THE question of the date of Easter, which was the subject of acute controversy many centuries ago, and which for long has been accepted without question, has recently attracted public attention.

The date is dependent upon a calculation involving the Vernal Equinox and the new Moon, and varies between March 22nd and April 25th, which is a period of thirty-five days. This great variation, which was not material until the modern world became industrialized, now causes in the present complicated state of society many disadvantages. Prior to 1923 numerous bodies, such as Chambers of Commerce and Industrial Associations, had taken up the matter, and in that year the League of Nations appointed a Committee of Inquiry to go into the question

of the reform of the calendar generally, which would include the fixing of movable feasts, and in particular the fixing of Easter. The Committee was composed of six members, three being very distinguished laymen and three being representatives of the Churches, namely:—

- (1) A representative of the Holy See.
- (2) A representative of the Œcumenical Patriarch of Constantinople as representing the Eastern Church; and
- (3) The Reverend T. E. R. Phillips, now President of the Royal Astronomical Society of London, appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Committee communicated with practically all Churches, Governments, civil authorities, educational authorities, and commercial institutions throughout the world. As a result of those inquiries they were unable to recommend any scheme for the general reform of the Calendar. They gained the clear impression that, although a great number of people in many countries had shown great interest in the question, and although powerful propaganda movements were on foot, it was nevertheless a fact that public opinion was not yet prepared, even if it welcomed reform, to press for immediate action in a particular direction. Their efforts, therefore, so far as related to the general reform of the calendar, were nugatory.

The position, however, with regard to the stabilization of Easter, which they decided to consider on a separate basis, was quite different, for the Report of the Committee states that:—

"With regard to the stabilization of Easter, the Committee feels that its inquiries warrant the drawing of certain very definite conclusions."

In stating these conclusions the members of the Committee put in the foremost place the question of the attitude of the Churches, and they proceeded to give the results of the questions submitted to the various clerical bodies.

In the first place the views of the Holy See were found to be as follows:—

"Any changes which might be made with regard to the fixing of Easter, though they would meet with no objections from the point of view of dogma, would nevertheless involve the abandonment of deeply rooted traditions from which it would be neither legitimate nor desirable to depart, except for weighty reasons of universal interest; the Holy See added that it did not see sufficient reason for changing what had been the perpetual usage of the Church, handed down by immemorial tradition and sanctioned by the Councils from early times. Even if, therefore, it were shown that some change in these traditions were desirable for the good of mankind, the Holy See would not be prepared to consider the question except on the advice of the forthcoming Œcumenical Council."

The views of the Eastern Church were:—

"That the Orthodox Church was prepared, if all Christian Churches were in agreement, to pronounce in favour of the stabilization of Easter."

By decision of the Convocation of the Anglican Church, dated April 28th, 1925, this Church has expressed its opinion:—

"(1) That there is no dogmatic reason why the Church should oppose a fixed date for Easter, but the Church of England could not consent to the proposed change unless it was accepted by the other Christian Communions.

"(2) That if a fixed Easter were adopted, April should be assigned for the Festival, which should fall on a Sunday, approximately midway between the present limits of variation.

"(3) That it is important to take into account the whole sequence of the Church's Year in considering any proposals for fixing Easter, and particularly for any general reconstruction of the Calendar."

All the other religious bodies consulted were prepared to fall in with the change if made.

The Committee summed up the position of the Churches as follows:—

"Probably all the religious authorities, in spite of the difficulties mentioned by some of them, would be ready to consider the stabilization of Easter, if the benefit to mankind of such a reform could be clearly defined and proved."

The Report of the Committee then proceeds to give the result of inquiries from civil Governments and civil bodies, which are unanimously in favour of the change.

The date generally suggested was the second Sunday in April, but the Committee recommend a slight variation, namely, the first Sunday after the second Saturday in April, to avoid the possibility of Passion Sunday falling on the same day as the feast of the Annunciation, which would not be acceptable from the religious point of view.

From the fixing of Easter the advantages which would accrue to secular bodies would be great. For instance, in the case of education, the school holidays and university vacations could be fixed; the length of the terms would not vary year by year.

From the commercial point of view similar benefits would arise. A particular instance might be taken of a railway company having its financial year ending on March 31st each year. According to present arrangements a financial year of that company may have two sets of Easter traffics in any one year or one set of Easter traffics or no Easter traffics at all. The accounts under the new system would for certain have only one set of Easter traffics, and the results of all years could be compared on the same basis. There seems to be no doubt whatever from the point of view of business that the arrangement, if adopted, would be very satisfactory, and various important public bodies like the London County Council have passed resolutions in its favour.

The matter is, of course, primarily one for the Churches. Their attitude is, as is shown above, that from a religious point of view alone there is no point in making the change, but they would be ready to consider the stabilization of Easter "if the benefit to mankind of such a reform could be clearly defined and proved." The onus of the initiative has accordingly been quite properly placed by the Churches upon the secular authorities, and in order that some steps may be taken in the direction indicated a Bill has been introduced in the House of Commons for the stabilization of Easter on the day suggested by the Committee. The Bill contains a proviso that the Act shall not come into force unless and until an Order in Council has been made; that is to say, the Act will not, if passed, become immediately operative, but will be held in suspense, pending the Government of the day negotiating and arranging with the Churches for the stabilization of Easter, which must be effected by the consent of all the Churches, and such other Governments as will also be prepared to agree.

Fears have been expressed that the Churches, thinking, quite rightly, that this is primarily a religious matter, will resent any interference by the civil authorities, but this is no doubt a misconception. The Churches, as above explained, do not of themselves want the change, but would consider the matter if cause was shown. The Churches cannot logically, of course, refuse to take the initiative till proof is given to them, and object to secular bodies endeavouring to give such proof to them. It is to be hoped therefore that the religious bodies will understand that no infringement of their jurisdiction is contemplated in any way whatsoever and take such steps in the direction indicated as they think wise. For instance, it is understood that the Holy See is calling an Œcumenical Council next year. It is greatly hoped that this matter will be on the

agenda. It will hardly be placed in such an important position unless some Governments move in the matter and bring the question into prominence.

It is to be greatly hoped that in due course the Churches will think the case proved, and proceed to take the necessary steps to fix the religious festival. Then the Act of Parliament would come into operation to make the civil date correspond with the religious.

If nothing in this direction is done, it may well be that the civil authorities may find that the variation of the spring holidays causes so much dislocation that it will be best to stabilize the holidays independently of the religious festivals, fixing, say, the second week-end in April for the purpose. It will be a pity if this is done, as it is no doubt in the interest of the Churches that the religious festivals should coincide with public holidays. It would not be in the interests of religion that Good Friday, the most solemn day in the religious year, should be an ordinary working day in the week, and that Easter should be deprived of its association with the Easter Bank Holiday, which gives it special importance.

It has been suggested that if Easter is fixed it might be advisable to bring summer time into force each year on the Sunday before Easter, so that the whole of the Easter holidays would have the benefit of the change in each year. But that is another story.

AT ST. STEPHEN'S "AND SO TO BED"

(BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

THE House of Commons has unexpectedly met before the Easter holidays. Handfuls of less than a hundred have hitherto carried on irrelevant debates on unimportant subjects. Suddenly the Budget, the Trade Unions Bill, and to a lesser extent the Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill have been pitched in as measures of controversy and provocation. And members have gathered from all the quarters of the earth to listen. And immediately these members will be dispersed for their legitimate holidays, in order to reflect with such irritation or tranquillity as may be on such strange doings.

Mr. Winston Churchill fought the House of Commons alone. The men who were most in opposition to and suspicious of him were the men of his own party. I have seen many Budgets; but never one in which a Chancellor of the Exchequer has been so isolated. The only thing that could have cheered him was the kiss thrown to him by his wife, who sat with their son behind the Prince of Wales in the Members' Gallery. All his party demanded a heroic scheme of "economy," and he defiantly and rhetorically declared that "economy" was impossible. For quite a long time he completely bored a crowded house; although as a matter of fact I did not see a single member go out; while he discussed in rhetorical or humorous vein the result of the general strike, the result of the coal strike, the enormous tribute England is paying America, the dolorous position of national finance, and the essential financial stability of this country. Members listened in tolerant silence. What they all were waiting for, and what they wanted to know, was what changes he proposed to make in immediate taxation. The sensational announcement was that while all men had estimated that he would budget for an increased revenue of twenty millions, he defiantly declared that in order to maintain sound finance and the redemption of the debt he intended to raise additional revenue of thirty-eight millions, an increase nearly double the sensational achievement of Mr. Lloyd George's great Budget, and probably unknown in peace time in any financial scheme since the days of William the Conqueror.

The Tory benches exhibited a condition of disastrous suspense, while each man said, "Is it I? Is it I? Will he increase income tax? Will he increase super tax? Will

he increase death duties?" And all around me impartial witnesses were speculating as to what he proposed to do. Suddenly, and almost in the last ten minutes, unlike Mr. Tom Shaw, he produced rabbits out of the hat. First he threw at them some small Protectionist and Imperial Preference duties, at which they cheered wildly. Then he suddenly scraped up an amazing series of windfalls, the total of which no man had anticipated. Making the brewers pay a month in advance gave him nearly five millions. Shearing the Road Fund of all its capital sum added another thirteen millions. And finally, by getting three half-yearly payments of Schedule A income tax into this year's financial scheme, he added fourteen millions to the revenue; while explaining that the landlords will only have to pay some five hundred thousand a year extra on interest. The House had by this time become completely hypnotized, and were unable to see that he was anticipating revenue, and that such process could not be repeated by any success in twelve months' time. As we ought to be spending more like a hundred millions than thirteen millions on making new roads, which are the most important of our developing national resources, Mr. Lloyd George made a protest against what a member asserted was "highway robbery." But Mr. Snowden, who, I think, had expected something quite different, found some difficulty in criticizing what he has proclaimed as "sound finance" as understood by the Treasury, that is, allocating vast sums obtained from whatever quarter possible in order to pay off great portions of the National Debt. Whether Mr. Churchill can carry such a Budget as this remains conjectural. But few who witnessed the scene would refuse to congratulate him on turning a House definitely hostile at first, and afterwards immersed in infinite boredom, into a House which at the end and for the moment was bewildered by the belief that Mr. Churchill had accomplished the unaccomplishable, and produced results that no one had reckoned within the possibilities of financial juggling.

But the Budget, although so largely advertised in the country, is not the main subject of discussion in the House of Commons. That is the Trade Unions Bill, which, both in the magnitude of its campaign against the Trade Unions and the extraordinary sloppiness and confused verbiage of its provisions, surprised both those who want to declare war on these institutions and their defenders. Mr. Churchill's proposals will not strike the dominant note of the Session, and in face of this new class war may even pass with a perfunctory examination. The chief thing noticeable in the lobbies is that while Liberals and moderate Conservatives exhibit feelings of perplexity or regret, the men who are most satisfied appear to be the Labour Opposition; who, in the words of the poet, appear to be "as joyful as the rising sun in May." The fact is that for the last few weeks the feeling between the back benches and the front benches of Labour has grown so strong, that to the outsider it seemed inevitable that there would be a complete break into two warring sections. Now Mr. Baldwin has achieved the miracle of giving them "peace in our time, O Lord." For the Trades Unionists are looking to the Socialists to fight the Bill in the House of Commons, and the Socialists are keen and alert to get a reputation for defending a Trade Unionism which has shown signs of shrinkage and decay. There are some Tories who think that the reduction of Trade-Union political subscriptions is worth this consolidation of Labour Opposition and all Trade Unionists against the Government. But from all that I can hear, and I have talked with many on the subject, Labour believes that the consolidation which will be attained by what they will interpret as an attack of the rich against the poor, will more than compensate for any future loss of revenue. And, moreover, that in the general anger they can arouse against such a process they will easily be able to get a form signed once a year for contracting-in. He that is unjust will be unjust still and he that is righteous will be righteous still. It is said that the Conservative Party chest is not well filled with funds, and that the projected sale of peerages, baronetcies, and knighthoods to replenish it may be subjected to substantial violence of criticism if at the same time the Labour Opposition is deprived of the necessary monies to fight the next general

election. A very considerable portion of the Conservatives and almost all the Liberals with one or two quaint and amazing exceptions endorse the verdict of Mr. Garvin in the OBSERVER, that this is the type of blunder that is worse than a crime.

But for the clash of these two gigantic forces in finance and in class war, more attention might have been given to the Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill, introduced by the indomitable Jix last week. The sixty-odd Conservatives present listened with a kind of silence that might be felt, while the Conservative Home Secretary, occupying exactly the same place opposite the box that Mr. Lloyd George occupied eighteen years ago, offered examples of landlord tyranny and "confiscation," which when offered by the Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer in the big Budget, converted the whole Conservative Party into a kind of writhing fury of indignation. Every moment one rubbed one's eyes and expected to hear a repetition of the same phrases as: "This is not business but blackmail." It is true that Jix, finding his followers unsympathetic, almost grovelled in praise of the good landlord, and explained that the Bill only applied to a very limited few who desired to grab goodwill built up by their tenants and had nothing to do with such accursed propositions as that any part of the community-created value should go to the community. It is true also that the Bill by its limitations, and especially by excluding treatment of all private dwelling houses, is but the phantom of the shadow of a name. But on the other hand, it did seem to me, unimportant or even impotent as its provisions may be, an example of a distinct change in the composition and attitude of the Conservative Party. In the old days the landlords and the landlord-interest dominated, and the commercial classes had to "tremblingly obey." To-day in the fight against Socialism the important thing is to get the support of the commercial and business interests. In such a fight the landlords must of necessity go to the wall. For the former can say to the latter, in the inspiring appeal of the poet, "We are many, ye are few."

BOOKS AND THE PUBLIC

THE BOOKSELLER'S POINT OF VIEW

[In our issue of February 26th, we published an article, "Books and the Public," with the idea of opening a discussion on the various problems of the Book Industry. The discussion is continued this week from the standpoint of the Bookseller.—ED., NATION.]

IT is highly important in a symposium of this kind that all the factors should be considered. The contracting parties in the Book Trade are Authors, Publishers, Booksellers, and it is the last mentioned and not the least important branch of the trinity that claims my interested attention. The Bookseller has probably the most difficult task of the three.

Perhaps there is not much the matter with the machinery of Publishing and Bookselling, nothing anyway in which the public Press can help us by discussion.

There are points at issue between the contracting parties always arising, and what is wrong can only be put right by them, all these technicalities are capable of solution by the trade itself in council.

There are, however, questions of importance which can be usefully discussed, and THE NATION is to be thanked for the opportunity thus given. The price of books; the remuneration the Author, Publisher, and Bookseller receive from the sale of books; the public attitude towards books and book-buying; these are all debatable subjects, and have been referred to in the admirable articles preceding this one.

The Bookseller will accept without hesitation all Mr. Keynes's conclusions, and be thankful to see them stated so clearly by an author of his standing. He says, and with

our entire approval, that no one is getting too much out of Bookselling, and this is indeed true.

The Bookseller would go further perhaps, and say that on the sale of new books alone he makes a rather sorry net profit, and he may claim reasonably that his desire is to sell new books, unencumbered with all those additions so obvious in most bookshops to-day. He may be interested in the new ideas fresh from the minds of the clever writers of the day in Poetry, History, Science, Essays, and the imaginative literature we call Fiction, which so certainly reflects the life and spirit of the time; he may wish to confine his energies to selling the best in literature, both old and new, and it should not be asking too much that a dealer in the modern writers should be more adequately rewarded.

Another side of the question is the adequacy of Booksellers, their shops, and those who attend the public in them.

Here there is room for improvement. The question of the education of assistants is before the Association of Booksellers now, and a Committee is working out a scheme by which young people beginning their business life are to be taught something of English literature, and that modicum of learning necessary to their intelligent capacity as assistants. This might be acquired at school, or by a matriculation examination, but if not, examinations will be arranged for beginners, the passing of which will constitute a more suitable entrance to the trade.

The scarcity of Bookshops in Great Britain referred to by Mr. Keynes is the natural result of the limited profit on the sale of new books, and the consequent unattractiveness to business men who wish to see a fair return on their capital.

The lack of bookshops is noticeable all over the country, and in one seaside town near London, three shops have been closed in recent years.

We must realize that the remedy for this unhappy condition is an increase in the demand for books, and such experiments as the National Book Council's and co-operative methods of our own initiation are gaining increased support.

Every town of reasonable size should have at least one well-equipped bookshop, which would be a meeting-place for the literary folk and students in the town.

Suggestions are made from time to time to open the Ideal Bookshop, in which an immense stock of books would be on view, and the assistants would be able to advise and answer the most difficult questions.

This scheme might or might not be a profitable venture, but the establishing all over the country of good ordinary bookshops with well-stocked shelves in every town or village of any size is a more reasonable hope, and should be attainable. This evidence of books for sale everywhere would at last penetrate the mind of the public and produce an increased demand for books.

It must not be forgotten, either, that to increase the book-buying public and to create a new one, you must begin at the beginning. Children must be taught the use and pleasure of reading; a taste for reading once acquired, the love of books is never lost, and becomes veritably one of the blessings of life.

Another duty of the modern bookseller is to acquire himself and to impart to the public a sound view of the importance of the craft to the community.

The selling of books affects the intellectual life of the people very nearly, combining with the Artist and Teacher and in fact becoming their introducer to the public in furthering new ideas and explaining old ones; there is no better way. Booksellers therefore should cultivate a good literary judgment for the benefit of the public and not

regard their calling merely as a commercial venture. There are standards in literature, and it is possible for booksellers and their staffs to acquire the useful art of distinguishing the best from the second-rate, indeed it is their duty to do so.

The bookseller at the right moment and on occasion may advise and so influence taste, especially amongst the young.

We can do much to foster and increase the love of reading, to create an enthusiasm for reading great, refreshing, and clever books.

Finally, then, what is wrong with modern bookselling is the actual limitation in the sale of books, and perhaps this is our grievance against the public, that they do not systematically and encouragingly buy books. This attitude of mind may be instanced by an extreme case, a well-to-do country-man who stated boldly that he never bought books, he had only read "Jorrocks and the Bible."

Certainly in England it is not untrue to say that the number of books sold does not in any way compare with the population which presumably would call itself an educated, cultured community. The remedy, then, must be the endeavour of the Publishers and Booksellers to find methods to increase the sale of books.

This may be a counsel of perfection, but to it should be applied all the energy of those who control and support the Book Trade.

CHARLES YOUNG.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE current Labour explanation of the Trade Unions Bill as the result of the pressure of employers upon the Government is certainly mistaken. The Bill is the last thing that the industrialists want. I know on excellent authority that weeks ago when legislation was first foreshadowed very urgent representations were made by employers to the Government, begging them, in the interests of reviving trade, to do nothing. From the business point of view the Bill is a piece of madness. It is the bastard issue of an alliance of legal pedants and excited "patriots." There is great disquiet about it among moderate Conservatives for whom Mr. Garvin speaks with trumpet blast. Among people who are not interested in party polemics—that is to say, any ordinary gathering of citizens—the threat to national peace is felt to be so dangerous that in spite of everything hopes are entertained of a compromise. Luckily the Budget gives a breathing time during which Mr. Baldwin and his friends may well find ways of reasserting themselves. Mr. Baldwin has hinted at consultation with the Trade Unions, and that would be one safety valve. He may well be banking on a period of consultation in which concessions will be made; some optimists hope that the Liberal solution of an inquiry will be accepted even now. When it comes to debate there will be no need for organized Labour obstruction. The Bill bristles with every kind of doubt, difficulty, and vagueness, and I do not think the Government will have the audacity to bottle discussion. In any event therefore the Bill is likely to be greatly toned down in its passage through the House, and that, no doubt, is what the Prime Minister is hoping will happen.

Mr. Churchill's anxiety to scrape together every possible sixpence does not excuse his incorporation of the translucent pottery duty in the Budget. It is really scandalous. There was an application which the operatives in the trade refused to support, and which was turned down by one of the three members of the Committee in a devastating minority report. The case for

the makers of bone china at Longton had every possible weakness, yet they won over two of the Committee to propose duties which would enormously increase the price of the cheap china imported from Germany and Czechoslovakia. Any unprejudiced person glancing at the evidence would be convinced, I think, that the real causes of the depression in the bone china trade have little or nothing to do with the competition of cheap felspar china from abroad. The chief cause seems to be the enormous increase in the English prices since the war, which has driven the consumer to buy either foreign china, which costs less than half as much (owing, not to lower foreign wages, but to cheaper materials and processes), or else English earthenware which has made great progress in appearance and costs about as much as the foreign china. In short, the fine Longton product is becoming a luxury. This is clearly a case where the safeguarding machinery is being used to protect an industry whose depression is not due to foreign competition at all. The healthy remedy is not a tariff, but a revolution in methods of manufacture leading to a drop in prices.

Party controversy has the usual falsifying and distorting effect in the matter of China. The reckless interchange of accusations, chiefly between Tories and Labour men, is not merely confusing, but ends in the complete concealment of important facts. Take, for instance, the point of the militarization of the Chinese. To listen to Labour extremists you would suppose that it is all our fault: we have corrupted them by our example and are now punishing them for their efficiency by sending out an army to fight them. To listen to Tory extremists it would appear that it is all the fault of the wicked Soviet Government in feeding the Cantonese with arms and leadership. I have been supplied from a reliable source with some figures relating to the supply of arms to China which are more illuminating than the speeches of many passionate politicians. The Chinese have been supplied with armaments from the factories of Europe as a mere matter of competing business. Europeans are flying for safety from soldiers who may be armed by weapons made in their own countries—a sort of Nemesis. During 1925 Germany sent into China armaments to the value of nearly £700,000; Norway, it is interesting to find, supplied £250,000 worth, and Italy, £200,000. The arsenal of the Cantonese was equipped from American factories; France has sent military aeroplanes; Russians, White and Red, are supplying armaments and men to both the warring sections. There is one omission from the list over which I as a patriot rejoice. Alone among the great nations of the world Great Britain has refrained from the traffic in arms in China. If a moral is wanted it is plain; let the Arms Traffic Convention be signed and ratified by all the Great Powers.

The late "Lulu" Harcourt, when Colonial Secretary, used to say that the New Hebrides kept him awake at night. Successive Colonial Secretaries have been baffled by the obscure confusion of its affairs. No one seems to know to whom the New Hebrides belongs, or how it is governed, except that there is mention of that nebulous and irritating term Condominium. Now there is to be a commission of inquiry about whose position and composition no one knows anything. From what I hear it seems that the government and the judiciary are carried on in a sort of amicable confusion between the British and the French. Where the jurisdiction of the one begins and that of the other ends is a mystery. There are further delightful muddles caused by the French officials not speaking English and the English officials not speaking French, and the few Dutch officials not speaking either; all being dependent

in their intercourse with the natives upon an interpreter who is presumably a sort of lingual gymnast. All this might be merely farcical but for the sinister background of oppression which is rather guessed at than known. It is said that about half the native population has disappeared in the last twenty-five years. Very serious allegations have been made for a long time about the conditions under which the natives are recruited for labour and about the abuses and delays of justice. The alleged strategical importance of the islands is a complication of high politics. The best solution for the unsavoury mess would be to let the League of Nations clean it up. It seems an obvious case for a mandate.

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Finding myself with an hour on my hands in the City some mornings ago I occupied it with a favourite pursuit—the exploration of Wren churches. I added several new specimens to my collection of impressions. The most memorable was the church close to the Lord Mayor's back door, that has a bookshop plastered against its side, which bookshop I have known for twenty years, hardly realizing that it masked an architectural masterpiece. For St. Stephen's, Wallbrook, is surely nothing less with its bold clusters of columns and its surprising dome. I thought of Sydney Smith's irreverent sally about the Pavilion at Brighton, that "St. Paul's had gone to Brighton and pupped." The saying is more applicable and seemly if applied to this experiment in the St. Paul's manner. The City is full of such surprising discoveries for the rambler. An old man deep in prayer and myself deep in admiration were the sole occupants. In hunting churches the best plan is to have no plan except Mr. Wemmick's "Hullo, here's a church, let's go in." Finding myself afterwards near the Tower I visited a church I know very well—All Hallows, Barking. There was no solitude here. I found myself joining a "pilgrimage" that was visiting the beautiful fourteenth-century crypt, which has been rediscovered by the vicar, the famous war padre, "Tubby" Clayton. He has made All Hallows the religious centre in these parts of the Talbot House movement, which tries to keep alive the Lamp of Sacrifice in the dark days of peace. The Prince of Wales was there last week unveiling various memorials, of which the most interesting is a bronze effigy of a young man killed in the war. It is worthy in its beauty to represent to the future all the beautiful young men whose lives were poured out as water.

* * *

My interest in that cross-grained genius Samuel Butler will probably take me to Hodgsons in Chancery Lane when "Alfred's" collection of first editions is sold this month. Everyone who has read Mr. Festing Jones's lively Memoir has delighted in Butler's servant and friend, to whose "watchful eye and sustaining hand" Butler owed so much. It was of his relations with Alfred that Butler wrote: "I was like a basket that had been entrusted to a dog." Butler was a difficult man to have to do with, but he seems to have treated this faithful helper with an unvarying humorous tenderness. He was always quoting Alfred's naïve sayings in letters to his friends. When Mandell Creighton invited Butler to stay with him Butler consulted Alfred, who asked to see the letter and said, "I see, sir, there is a crumb of tobacco in it. I think you may go." Butler gave Alfred copies of most of his books with inscriptions. He left him £2,000 in his will. The books and other Butler mementoes are now to be sold in a sale-room within a hundred yards of the rooms in Clifford's Inn—which may soon disappear—where they were written. I shall go to the sale to see whether my favourite, "Alps and Sanctuaries" is among them.

I wonder what that strange man Private Shaw, of the Royal Air Force, is thinking about the reception of his strange book. Mr. Robert Graves, who was talking about him over the wireless the other night, has heard from him, but he gave us only the interesting but tantalizing information that "Shaw" is at present on half-pay. I have a notion that Lawrence takes no particular pleasure in the amazing success of his book. His speciality seems to be the avoidance of all success. His spirit quickly tastes the after-bitterness of glory. That is his superlative distinction. His extinction in the Air Force gives the last perfect touch to the story. "The Revolt" is, of course, a very great book, but I feel rather uneasy when people who have read "The Seven Pillars" tell me that it is, in comparison with that monument, only a very good book. I hope there will be no long delay before we are allowed to have the complete work in a fairly accessible form. It is not fair that this masterpiece should be the monopoly of a handful of wealthy men who are probably too busy making more money to read it. A full edition, in several volumes if necessary and without the illustrations if they cannot be done at a reasonable price, is demanded, and the demand ought to be satisfied. It is not merely tantalizing, it is positively painful to be told that the account Lawrence gives in the full book of his captivity and escape is a marvellous piece of writing. We want to read it. According to Mr. Graves, a man who read it in the printing was so upset that he could not go to work for a week. Well, I could do with a week's holiday.

* * *

A humble admirer of the gospel of "speed and efficiency" in newspaper enterprise I perused my DAILY MAIL on April 6th with especial admiration. For on this date the speed had been so great that the paper had swept along in its headlong progress a portion of the previous day's issue. The whole of one of the pages—the sporting page—was dated April 5th and contained the news of that day. Lord Northcliffe would have enjoyed this.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE TRADE UNIONS BILL

SIR,—In your article dealing with the above subject this week you place in the forefront of your argument an expression of hostility to those provisions of the Bill relating to the political levy. This is singular, in that it is this feature of the Bill which has in other quarters usually met with secondary criticism. Before this attitude is allowed to become completely uncompromising, it seems to me to be well to consider the position under the present state of the law of supporters of the Liberal and Conservative parties who are also members of trade unions. Although no doubt the majority of members of trade unions belong to the Labour Party, still the supporters of the other parties are by no means inconsiderable in number. But, unhappily, they are inarticulate. Their voices are inaudible amongst the more insistent tones of the lawyers, economists, professors and experts of different kinds. I believe that there are a great number of working-class Liberals and Conservatives who have been looking to their political leaders for years to put right a state of affairs which they regard as grossly unfair. I recall that at the Liberal Convention, at which I was a delegate, the political levy was the subject of bitter and resolute denunciation from trade unionist delegates, which fell with somewhat unexpected fury upon a middle-class audience. This divergence of view seems to have grown more marked, until now it is reflected in the columns of THE NATION, where the complaint of the Liberal trade unionist who is subscribing to Labour Party funds is apparently unheard. It requires more than the "little courage," of which Lord Oxford once spoke, to contract out of a powerful trade union in an industrial town. I suspect that there are many Liberals, and up to now many Conservatives, who consider that a little courage is required by their leaders rather than themselves, and who will

shortly decide to throw in their lot with the party to whose funds they find themselves in any case bound to subscribe unless that little courage is forthcoming.

Much of the above may apply with equal force to those parts of the Bill, no matter how badly drafted they may be, which aim at restricting the present methods of picketing. There seems to me to be a compelling duty upon the non-Labour parties to protect their individual members in the ranks of the trade unions in these matters. And I suppose, in spite of much powerful argument to the contrary, that the right to combine must still involve as its corollary the right to refuse to combine with those with whom you disagree.—Yours, &c.,

GEOFFREY HUTCHINSON.

2, Paper Buildings, Temple, E.C.
April 8th, 1927.

[It would probably require just as much courage to refrain from contracting in to the political levy "of a powerful trade union in an industrial town" as it now requires to contract out of it. Where trade unionists are strongly organized, the provisions of Clause 4 of the Bill would make little difference. But they would deprive the Labour Party of the contributions of the negligent and the indifferent in places where trade unionism is less predominant. We dislike the proposal because we regard it as a mean and petty attempt by the Government to diminish the financial resources of their political opponents.—ED., NATION.]

RECIPROCITY OF COMMUNICATIONS

SIR,—You ask me whether "a canal which links the Scheldt to the Rhine has something to do with the navigation of the Scheldt." Very indirectly it has, of course. All navigation is somehow related. But the point at issue was whether the navigation of the Scheldt is complete without canals connecting the port of Antwerp with other rivers. This seems obvious.

As regards the signatories to "the treaties of Westphalia," I agree with your plural. The point is that these arrangements are peculiar not only in that they were made in two towns, Münster and Osnabrück, but also in having two quite different aspects which ought not to be confused. On the one hand, they were the conclusion of the German Thirty Years' War, and as such concerned France, Sweden, the Emperor, and a number of petty German States and Swiss cantons. But on the other hand, they concluded the Eighty Years' War between the Crown of Spain and the Republic of the United Netherlands. France, the other Power which, during thirteen years, had been at war with Spain, refused to participate in this section of the negotiations, and continued hostilities for another eleven years, whilst the Hispano-Portuguese conflict lasted another twenty years. Therefore the settlement between the Crown of Spain and the Dutch Republic was not made by "a combination of Powers," but by the Spanish and Dutch Governments alone.

Nor, for that matter, was the Republic "granted territory." On the contrary, the third article of the treaty between Spain and the Republic stipulated expressly that both parties should hold what they had (*uti possidetis*) at the time of negotiating. The territory south of the Scheldt, which the Republic had redeemed from the Crown of Spain, therefore simply remained Dutch, and in every respect has remained Dutch to this day. That is what has made this historical question of actual importance, not merely in 1839, but "when the Great War was over," as you said in your original comments. And with reference to this I should like to ask what exactly you mean by an "equitable readjustment of jurisdictional rights"? Do you suggest the cession to a foreign State of original Dutch territory inhabited by loyal Dutchmen? That, indeed, is what the French annexionist group in Belgium are working for. It goes without saying that from the Dutch point of view such considerations are out of bounds, as they ought to be from the English Liberal point of view. For apart from the normal maintenance of Dutch sovereignty over Dutch territory, there need be no cause for controversy, as the Dutch Government remains prepared to grant Belgian shipping

all reasonable facilities, and, indeed, amicably to go a good way beyond this.

Therefore, I do wonder what you had in mind when pressing for "readjustment."—Yours, &c.,

I. I. BRANTS.

London Editor of the AMSTERDAM HANDELSBLAD.

[We do not imagine that Holland would have obtained the *uti possidetis* clause without the diplomatic assistance of the group of signatory Powers with whom she had been making war against Spain. We never took the Belgian demand for cession of territory very seriously. Negotiators who present a claim generally open their mouths wide; a country that has been four and a half years under the military domination of Germany is not likely to declare war on her neighbours. We should regard any arrangement which gave Antwerp the military and commercial status of an ordinary national harbour as an equitable readjustment of jurisdictional rights.—ED., NATION.]

THE OPPORTUNITY OF LIBERALISM

SIR,—Your issue of the 2nd. I have read with great attention the article by "Watchman." Will you allow me to make some criticism? I have worked hard for the Liberal Party for the last sixty years; my father was a Liberal, and my grandfather worked hard for the Liberal Party at a date when such activity involved great risk of imprisonment.

It is a mistake to suppose that divisions of leadership have injured the Liberal Party. The Party never has been under one undivided leadership. When the greatest of all Liberal victories was achieved in 1906 there was a very serious division in the Liberal Party. Rosebery, Asquith, Grey, Haldane, Robson, all exceedingly clever men, were leading the Imperialistic or war party, while Campbell-Bannerman, Morley, Birrell, Runciman, Burns, and many others were for peace, retrenchment, and reform. Divisions and discussions produce thought; thought produces Liberalism. "Watchman" sneers at Free Trade as being "negative." But Free Trade is the one essential for peace, prosperity, wealth, and health. The Conservative Party, supported by some members of the Labour Party, is making dangerous and injurious attacks on Free Trade.

"Watchman" condemns the present Government for the one good thing it has done since it came into office—the repeal of the miners' seven hours law for five years. This law was an attack upon the freedom of the miners to earn a comfortable living, and it was not repealed in the interests of the colliery owners, but in the interests of the working miners. The seven hours law was made in order to restrict production and cause a coal famine. It succeeded for a time. Wages were very high, profits were very large. The Excess Profits Tax, however, deprived the owners of any benefit. The cost of getting coal rose up to 40s. a ton of coal on truck at the collieries, but neither the coal trade nor industry generally could stand the high price of fuel. Costs had to come down and wage rates had to come down, and if miners were to earn a satisfactory wage it was necessary to allow them a reasonable time to work. Under the seven hours law there was only five hours work, and considering the great variety of things that have to be done in the time, it was in most cases impossible for the miner to get a proper quantity of coal in his shift. The eight hours law also has caused and is causing hardship. A coal miner can live to a happy old age if he is allowed sufficient time for his work. It is the pace which kills. Young athletes can do the work, but the middle-aged and old men have to suffer. What the people want is freedom from interference with their industry by politicians.—Yours, &c.,

ARNOLD LUPTON.

7, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1.
April 4th, 1927.

ARE BOOKS TOO DEAR?

SIR,—I am glad Mr. Keynes has at last discovered what has always been known to those who read French—that books in France cost a fifth or sixth of what they cost in England. I am gladder still that he realizes that the French read far more than the English, because this may help him to

believe, what I have often told him, that the French are far more highly civilized. But I am sorry that Mr. Keynes's sympathy with "business" should have led him to suppose that the remedy for the exorbitant price of English books lies with the public. If the public bought more, argues Mr. Keynes, the price of books could be reduced. Agreed: but how can the public buy more with English books at their present fantastic price? And if the public did buy more what guarantee have we that publishers would reduce their prices? Obviously it is for the publishers to move first: let one of them put on the market a large, cheap edition of a reputable book and see what response he gets from the public.—Yours, &c.,

CLIVE BELL.

Cassis.

March 28th, 1927.

A NEW HOME FOR "HEROES OF THE MIND"

SIR,—In THE NATION of the 2nd inst., "Kappa" drew attention in his interesting notes on "Life and Politics" to the "heroes of the mind and the liberating spirit," and reminded your readers that "South Place has been the home of good music." We are told "there is to be a new building in Red Lion Square which will be the headquarters of our Ethical Movement."

Meanwhile, "free speech and good music" are without a permanent home until some heroes of the pocket can be found willing to dedicate some £50,000 to this new building.

It may come as a surprise to many of your readers that the first thousandth concert was given at "South Place" in February. A very good account of 999 concerts has been

published for all lovers of music to read, and the Ethical Society would be well advised to publish the story of the thousandth concert, with the excellent photos taken by an amateur, as a souvenir and a permanent record of a unique event in the history of London.—Yours, &c.,

ETHICIST.

LONDON OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL

SIR,—An appeal has just been launched, sponsored by the Lord Mayor, with the object of raising £33,000 to provide long-overdue extensions at the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital (known all over the world as "Moorfields Eye Hospital").

In asking support from readers of THE NATION, may I draw attention to the following points?—

1. "Moorfields" is the oldest and largest Eye Hospital in the world. Its work is a national one, 50,000 patients from all parts of the country being treated each year.

2. This hospital is the recognized centre for the teaching of all branches of ophthalmology.

3. This is the first big appeal made on behalf of "Moorfields" for over twenty years.

4. A gift of £5,000 can be claimed when the first £10,000 of the Extension Fund has been raised.

Times are, I know, difficult, but may I ask your readers to remember that the work of "Moorfields" is nothing less than a perpetual campaign against blindness?—and in the interests of humanity this work must go on.—Yours, &c.,

THEODORE W. LULING,
Chairman.

City Road, London, E.C.1.

FIREWORKS

By D. H. LAWRENCE.

YESTERDAY being the twenty-fourth of June, and St. John's day; and St. John's day being also the day of midsummer festival, when there must be fiery celebration of some sort; St. John moreover being the patron saint of Florence; for these various reasons, Florence was lit up last night, and there was a show of fireworks from the Piazzale.

The illuminations were rather scanty. The Palazzo Vecchio had little frames of electric bulbs round the windows, very meagre. But above these, all along the battlements of the square roof, and in the arches of the thin-necked tower, and between the battlements at the top of the tower, the flames were orange-ruddy, and wavering. They danced the night-long witch-night dance, midsummer's eve; a hundred or two ruddy little dance-movements among the black, hard battlements, and round the lofty, unrelenting square crown of the building.

This was mediæval and fascinating, in the soft, hot, moonlit night. The Palazzo Vecchio has come down to our day, but not to our level. It lifts its long slim neck, and is like a hawk looking round; in the darkness its battlements ruffle their silhouette-like black feathers. Like an old fierce bird from the Middle Ages it lifts its head over the level town, eagle with notched plumes.

It is a wonder the modern spirit has not given it a knock over the head, as it stands there so elegant in fierce old haughtiness.

But the modern spirit, this Midsummer's Eve, has only got as high as the windows on the hard façade, fixing itself in stupid little electric bulbs. Electric bulbs are stupid because they are fixed, unwinking, unalive, giving off a flat, lifeless light. They are like brass nail-heads on furniture, just about as midsummerish and frisky.

Above, where the black battlements ruffle like pinion-tips upon the blond sky, and the dark-necked tower suddenly shoots up, the modern spirit has not yet reached. There the illuminations must be the old, oil-flare lamps, like little torches. Because the flames have living quick little bodies, that dance perpetually in the warm bland air, and keep up the night; like the creative witches, or Shiva dancing her dance of creation, the dance of the myriad movements.

All this alive dancement is very encouraging, upon the severe old building, that holds its fire-crested head in the sky, and ignores the page-button electric bulbs on its breast below.

How dreary things are when they never flicker and waver and change, when they keep on going on being the dreary same, and never rise on tiptoe, nor shake their fingers and become different, but pride themselves on their dead-head fixity. How stupid man has been, craving for permanency and machine-made perfection, when the only truly permanent things are those that are always quivering and departing, like fire and like water. After all, the sunrises and the rain have already wiped away a good deal of the Pyramids, which are so stupid and pretentiously everlasting. Who on earth wants to be a Pyramid, when we are all made up of little flames and rain-drops?

People were streaming out of the piazza, all in one direction; and all having that queer little lively crowded look, under the high buildings, that you see in the street-scenes of old pictures. Throngs and groups of striding and standing and streaming little humans, that still have a charm of alert life. And all diminutive, because of the large buildings that rise around them.

Not that the Palazzo Vecchio or the Uffizi palace are

really tall, in terms of the Woolworth Tower. But there again, the effect is all different. Look down on the street from the twenty-second storey in New York, and you see people creeping with the quick, mechanical repulsiveness of ants. It is all a question of proportion.

The people are all flowing towards the dark mouth of the Uffizi, towards the river. As they pass, the fountain continues to shoot up its long and leaning stem of water, unheeded, only Bandinelli's thick, naked marble man glistens all over in a gleaming wetness that gives him an elemental life of his own. Michael Angelo's David, untouched by the fountain, trails his foot with perpetual self-consciousness, and hopes the crowd will look at him. They do not; they pass under him and never think of him. Probably they do not like him, the over-life-size, smirking, self-conscious young man who looks like the beginning of all modern fatuity, with his big head. Anyhow, it is a curious thing that his name is utterly unknown to the ordinary Italians of the neighbourhood. Tell them your name is David, and they stare at you with blank, stupefied incomprehension. They have never heard the name. It might as well be tiddlywink. Yet there that great, realistic statue has stood, all this time, in the square where all the farmers meet every Friday to talk prices. You would think they would know its name. They do not, though.

On the Lungarno the crowd is solid. There is no wheel traffic. The whole length of the riverside has become one long theatre-pit, where the whole populace of the city is assembled to see the fireworks. In countless numbers they stand and wait, yet you would hardly know they are there, they are so quiet.

The fireworks will go off from the Piazzale Michelangelo, which hangs like a platform or a natural terrace over the left bank of the Arno. So the crowd solidly lines the right bank of the river, and the whole town is there.

In the sky a little to the south, the fair, warm moon, almost full, lingers in a fleece of iridescent cloud, as if also wanting to look on, but from an immeasurable distance. There is no crowding near, on the moon's part.

The crowd is subdued and well-behaved, without excitement and quite without exuberance. There is none of the usual exuberant holiday spirit. A man hawks half a dozen toy balloons, but nobody seems to buy them. Away down beyond the Ponte delle Grazie there is a flare-lit little stall, and a man baking those small aniseed waffles, which also nobody seems to buy. Only the vendors who silently walk through the crowd with little tubs of ice-cream, do a trade. But everything is curiously hushed.

It seems long to wait. Down on the grass and gravel of the still full river, under the embankment, are silent throngs of people. And even the boats used in the daytime for loading gravel, are crowded. In the obscurity it is like a scene from Dante's noiseless underworld.

Still we must wait. The young men, wearing no hats now the summer is here, stroll winding through the groups of immovable citizens and wives, and nobody has anything to do. Easiest thing is to sit in the motor-car by the kerb, and look at the moon.

Near the car stand two women, with a police-dog on a chain. The dog, of course, being a police-dog, is unhappy at the crowd. He crouches back against the car-wheel, rises again, turns round, looks at his mistresses, crouches again restlessly. *Bang!* Up goes the first rocket, like a golden tadpole wiggling in the sky, emitting finally a shower of red and green sparks. And the dog winces almost out of his skin, tries to get under the running-board, and is pulled away.

Bang! Bang! Crackle! More rockets, more showers

of sparks and fizzes of aster-petal light in the sky. The dog working in agony on his chain, the mistresses are divided between the showy heavens and him. In the sky, the moon draws further and further off, while still watching aloof. She is now at an immense distance, in another world of time. And near at hand, in the tallish sky, there is a rolling and fuming of smoke, a whistling of rockets, a spangling and splashing of coloured lights, and, most impressive of all, a continuous crepitation and explosion within the air itself, the high air bursting in explosions from within itself, in continual shocks. It is more like an air-raid than anything else.

So, the soul has two sets of impressions: that through hearing, dark and sinister, an impression of air-raids and war; that through vision, a sparkling and glitter of coloured lights in heaven. One is holiday and entrancement, the other is menace and depression.

The fool dog, of course, is in a pitiable state. He tries to hide himself on the face of the earth, and cannot. At every extra bang and crackle, he has to look, and he shivers mortally as the great lights burst out on the night. *Bish!* the sky-asters open one beyond the other, in a delayed fusillade. The dog shivers like a glass cup that is going to shatter. The mistresses are more thrilled by his terror than by the fireworks. It gives them a sense of strength, as they try to comfort him. He puts his paws over his ears, and buries his nose. But a fresh explosion shocks him out again, and he sits erect, like a bronze statue of pure nervous suffering. Then he curls upon himself again, as if he were his own only refuge. While the high sky bursts and reverberates, wiggles with tadpoles of golden fire, plunges into splashes of light, trembles downwards with spangles of fire, and is all frazzled and broken as if someone from above threw down continual stones into the sensitive ether.

The crowd watches in silence. Lounging young men wander by, and in the subdued tone of mockery usual to the Italians, they say: *Bello! bello! bellezza!*—But it is pure irony.

As the light flares out, you see dark trees and cypresses, Dantesque on the sky-line. And down below, you see townspeople standing with uplifted faces, motionless. Also you see a young man with his arm round the waist of his white-clad girl, caressing her and making public love to her. Love-making, like everything else, is now a public proceeding. The stag goes into the depths of the forest. But the young city buck likes the light to flare up and reveal his arm round the shoulders of his girl, his hand stroking her neck.

Up on the Piazzale they are letting off the figure pieces, wheels that turn round showerily in red and green and white fire, fuming dense smoke that moves curiously slow, in volumes, all interpenetrated with colour. Then there is a red piece; and on top of the old water-tower a column of red fire. It looks like a city flaming and fuming in the distance, burnt by the enemy. And again rattles the fusillade of a raid, while the smoke rolls ponderously, and the colour dies out, only the iridescence of the far, unreachable moon nakedly tinges the low fume.

More rockets! There are lovely ones that lean down in the sky like great spider lilies, with long, out-curving petals of soft light, and at the end of each petal a sudden drop of pure green fire, as it were dew. But some strange hand of evanescence brushes the blossom away, and it is gone, leaving the next rocket to burst and show all the smoke-threads still stretching in the sky, the ghost of the gone lily. The grey threads crumble like wild clematis fronds in autumn, as the succeeding brilliance blots them out.

And all the time, in another, more real world, the explosions and percussions continue, penetrating through the ear into the soul, with a sense of fear. The dog in vain has tried to get used to it. By now he is a numb nervous wreck.

There is a great spangling and puffing and trailing of long fires in the sky, long sprays of white fire-blossoms puff out, other many-petalled flowers curve their petals downwards like a grasping hand. Ah! Ah! at last it is all happening at once!

And as the eye is dazzled and thrilled, thinking how marvellous man is, the ear almost ceases to hear. Yet the moment the sky empties, it is the percussion of explosions that remains imprinted on the hidden memory, the eye forgets almost instantly.

So, it is over! That was the *finale*. The chauffeur is gabbling that it is shorter than last year. The crowd disperses quickly and silently, diving into the outlets from the Lungarno, as if they were running away. And you feel they are all mocking quietly at the spectacle. *Panem et circenses* is all very well, but when the crowd starts quietly jeering at your circus, you are left a bit at a loss.

And as you drive home again, into the silent countryside smelling faintly of vine-flowers, and you see the high moon filling the sky with her soft presence, you are so glad that she does not spin round and shed sparks, and make horrible explosions out of herself, but is still, and soft, and all-permeating.

POVERTY AND THEORISTS

"She is most bright, radiant, and beautiful,
Who serveth her, his heart stays ever young;
And wheresoever he goes free, she follows."

"Fortune hath bonds, which Poverty unbindeth;
Fortune is blind, but Poverty hath eyes;
Fortune is fickle: Poverty is faithful;
Fortune is foolish: Poverty is wise;
Fortune diminisheth: Poverty increaseth;
Fortune departeth: Poverty stays yoked.
Is not puffed up, doth not behave unseemly;
Thinketh no evil—is not soon provoked;
All things she beareth, all things believeth,
All things she yieldeth, seeketh not her own.
Endureth, never faileth, comforteth, shieldeth.
So I give praise to Poverty alone!"

IN one of Laurence Housman's "Little Plays," these are the words given to St. Francis, the most rapturous lover of poverty that the world has ever seen. There is a radiance of joy that shines through his life of hardship and self-sacrifice which wins the hearts of the men and women of to-day as it won the hearts of his fellow countrymen seven hundred years ago.

But though St. Francis still charms, and though in some directions we feel that we understand his teaching better than his contemporaries, could any one of us to-day, looking round at the conditions of our destitute poor, and especially the poor of our large towns, echo his praise of a life of poverty? Do our slum-dwellers keep young in heart? Does the lack of fortune bring them wisdom, or brightness, or freedom? Would it not be far nearer the truth to say that the lack of money shadows their lives, cramping and enslaving and often degrading them?

Perhaps for real poverty to be worthy of praise it must always be voluntary. There is nothing beautiful or ennobling in enforced destitution, whether in Assisi or London, and it is only when privations are endured for the sake of love that ugliness passes into beauty.

St. Francis's poverty was the joyful expression of love—love to God and love to man. Few people to-day

have the reckless courage to give up everything, but those who have made great renunciations of wealth and ease to live for others or devote themselves to some great cause know that the sacrifice may bring, in spite of privation and suffering, a fuller joy than has been left behind. Even in ordinary experience, the transforming effect of our own will power is one of the marvels of existence. Pain and hardship which may be crushing to the whole nature under coercion may serve as a bracing tonic when borne by free will.

At the present day a hearty defence of the grinding poverty of the slums is rarely heard. There are left a few doctrinaires who explain that only relentless competition can make possible the emergence of a higher type of man; that the "submerged tenth" is a necessary part of the struggle, and that regrets for the miserable lives of the failures are idle and unavailing. But for the most part we are ashamed of our submerged class, and inclined to regard it as a blot on our social life.

Bishop Gore in an address declared roundly that if churchmen were in earnest in the matter of their social duties the terrible poverty of the slums would be abolished because it would be unendurable to the conscience. With the right revolutionary spirit, he maintained there was no shadow of reason why conditions destructive to soul and intelligence should not be altered.

Dr. Gore's condemnation of the slums appears so natural that it is strange to remember that his view of poverty is a new view and does not belong to the orthodox Christianity of the past.

Some years ago a Modernist, excommunicated from the Church of Rome in consequence of his heretical opinions, declared that the "official doctrine" of the "official church" was "that we must have the poor always with us in order that they may provide the rich with opportunities of getting to heaven by almsgiving." As it stands, this passage expresses the enmity to authority of one who had abandoned his old faith, but phrased more reverently the idea would have been accepted less than a hundred years ago as part of the orthodox view, not only by Roman Catholics, but by nearly all sections of Protestants. Far from repelling, the notion that spiritual advantage was reaped from the vicarious suffering of the poor, was considered an edifying example of the mysterious ways of Providence "from seeming evil still adducing good."

In the religious teaching and moral tales of the last century a great deal is made of the valuable training ground for the altruistic virtues afforded by the sufferings of the poor. It was, of course, highly desirable to make good use of it in the bringing up of children. A rather crude example may be given from one of those thin little unattractive volumes with quaint woodcuts, that formed the juvenile library of the home. In "The Winter Scene" we hear of two responsive children whose training in sympathy and compassion was being conducted with due care that there should be no inconvenient over-eagerness engendered. A fall of snow reminds little William of Susan (an old servant) and her invalid husband who are helped by their mother. "Oh dear!" he says to his sister, what a pity it is that I spent my money in the summer in buying cakes and playthings. How little we have saved towards the blanket for Thomas and Susan." He learns that the blanket will cost twelve shillings, while they have saved only six. "I am afraid they will die of cold," he says, "while we are laying up our money." He is reminded that Susan has one blanket already, and his mother advises him not to indulge in useless regrets, but to keep his money in the future for purposes which convey more real pleasure than cakes. That evening, however, an uncle gives each of the children a present, and the money is devoted to the

purchase of the blanket. By mistake, it is not sent up from the shop, and the children are impatient. "It is very silly to talk in this way," says the mother, "and I shall not suffer you to join in such gratifications in future unless you behave with more self-command." The next day William is again checked for his anxiety in thinking of Susan and the invalid, cold and suffering without the blanket. But afterwards the children are able to take their gift to the cottage, and when they reach home after its presentation, and sit down to dinner we hear that "Charity and the keen wind sweetened their repast."

Up to recent times orthodoxy acquiesced readily in the idea of a very poor class as a necessary part of the social order ordained by God.

In the well-known article of the *QUARTERLY REVIEW* in 1848 upon "Jane Eyre," the critic, after a slashing attack on the novel and its unknown author, went on to say that one of the most dangerous tendencies of the book was to be found in the stirring up of its readers' discontent with the lot of the poor. "Altogether," says the anonymous reviewer, "the autobiography of Jane Eyre is pre-eminently an anti-Christian composition. There is throughout it a murmuring against the comforts of the rich and the privations of the poor, which so far as each individual is concerned, is a murmuring against God's appointment."

As late therefore as the middle of the last century it would appear that it was generally held that the responsibility for the crying poverty in the midst of wealth belonged not to a man-made commercial system ever tending to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, but was ordained of God. If the discontent with the miseries of the poor stirred up by the perusal of "Jane Eyre" was anti-Christian, what would have been thought at this time of Bishop Gore's explicit incitement to the right revolutionary action? This surely must have seemed so shocking as barely to escape the charge of blasphemy.

It is a far cry from the praises of vicarious poverty, whether as an instrument in the evolution of the superman or as a means of affording a stimulus to altruism in the more fortunate, to the praise of poverty sung by St. Francis. A far cry indeed! For St. Francis shared in the material hardships of the poverty-stricken class. He felt at one with them, and even degradation and crime could set up no barrier between himself and these outcasts of fortune. To St. Francis, Poverty was Love and Love was Poverty.

EMILY COX.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM is deeply indebted to the capable group of actors and actresses who have saved his new comedy, "The Constant Wife," from disaster. It is indeed worth a visit to the Strand Theatre to see how cleverly Miss Heather Thatcher, Miss Fay Compton, Mr. Paul Cavanagh, Miss Mary Jerrold, Mr. Leon Quartermaine, and Miss Marda Vane (in something like that order of merit) can give verisimilitude to artificial dialogue and unnatural behaviour. If, with their competent assistance, one can overlook the mechanical stupidity of the plot and the dreariness of forced stale epigrams, it is very pleasant to see such good teamwork by the whole caste. Miss Heather Thatcher's performance, as an inconstant wife, was particularly brilliant; Miss Mary Jerrold was extremely good as a cynical middle-aged lady; and Mr. Paul Cavanagh is so good-looking and attractive that Sir Gerald du Maurier will have to look to his laurels. But Mr. Maugham's inspiration failed him completely when he perpetrated this play, and as I came away from the theatre I promised myself another visit to "The Fanatics," where I can see live characters grappling with real problems.

There is no doubt about it; the audience at Drury Lane Theatre gets all the enjoyment from "The Desert Song" it goes to find. No one can be disappointed, for this new musical play is just as cheerful and comfortable as its predecessor. There is nothing in it to puzzle over; the whole story is so simple that you can sit through the

entire performance being easily amused by songs, dances, and music. And "Red Shadow," the leader of the band of robbers in the Riff mountains, is as romantic a figure as anyone could wish to see. Mr. Harry Welchman takes this part with just the right demeanour. Miss Edith Day is vivacious, and Mr. Gene Gerrard and Miss Clarice Hardwicke contribute an adequate amount of wit and humour. The musical numbers are sung with keen appreciation, but it is to the collective dancing that most praise must be given. The rhythm, especially in the dance of French soldiers, is wonderfully skilful.

* * *

The Forum Theatre Guild is an experiment which we must all approve and the promoters have been none too well treated over their first two experiments. Everyone, therefore, would wish to be sympathetic, but with the best will in the world, it is impossible to say much good for their latest production "The Dybbuk." Unfortunately, I did not see the Vilna Art Theatre production, which was so greatly admired. But I perceive that "The Dybbuk," superbly produced and mounted, and acted in an unintelligible tongue, might be very impressive. In translation, however, any beauty there may be in the original evaporates, and the superstitions of Jewish ritual and the boring sermons of the Rabbis were never heightened into aesthetic significance. Nor can much be said for the production; for the *décor* that was meant to look like Rembrandt, but didn't; for the crowds of beggars that were meant to be like Breughel and weren't. Nor was there much to be said for the acting, though Miss Jean Forbes-Robertson had one or two attractive moments as the possessed bride, and Mr. Michael Sherbrooke delivered his sermon as if it meant something. It is difficult to see how anyone not violently excited about Jewish mysticism can be interested in this performance. And it is instructive to contrast "The Dybbuk" with the well-written novels of the Brothers Tharred on similar subjects. One does not wish to be unkind, but really a production like this "is asking for it."

* * *

The film "White Wings" which has been shown at the Capitol deals with the historic race of the American and English tea clippers from China to Boston (Boston instead of London, but film producers for some reason consider themselves entitled to take liberties with history). The reason, according to this film, why the American ship did not win the race was owing partly to a typhoon and partly to complications on board, because the captain had abducted the daughter of the owner of the English ship, and, perforce, her blackguardly French fiancé, and the latter in revenge caused a shortage of water and started a mutiny. However, in spite of all this and of a rather unconvincing appearance of Queen Victoria, the film contains much that is good. The typhoon scenes are very well done, and many of the pictures of the ships at sea and in harbour are extremely pleasant to look at, as the photography is very good. (Ships, and especially sailing ships, form an excellent background for a film and can make up to a great extent for the poverty of a story.) As for the acting, Mr. William Boyd is suitably dashing and handsome as the American captain, but Miss Elinor Fair seemed often to forget that she was an aristocrat of early Victorian times.

* * *

On Monday, April 4th, 2LO gave an evening of three one-act plays: "The Long Arm of Coincidence," by Dion Titheradge; "Mr. Sampson," by Charles Lee, and "Evening Dress Indispensable," by Roland Pertwee. Of these, by far the best, both as a play and a performance, was "Mr. Sampson." This was the production that won the prize in the British Drama League's National Competition this year. Mr. Sampson, who lives in a cottage next door to two maiden sisters, brings havoc to their happy establishment by announcing that he wishes to marry one of them, but will leave the choice to them. The story is treated with a ruthless realism which never weakens, and the three characters were finely and quietly differentiated by Miss Elsie Colson, Miss Joyce Raby, and Mr. Ernest Selley. The play was well suited to broadcasting, and, with nothing sensational about it, reached a

high standard of excellence. The other two plays were of a much more conventional order. The plots, jokes, and characters were of the hardy perennial type, and in spite of the fact that Mr. Malcolm Keen, Miss Jeanne de Casalis and Miss Lilian Braithwaite took part in them the performances as a whole never reached the standard of an amateur production.

The Arts League of Service held an exhibition for two days during last week of the admirable portfolios of photographs of works of art which have been collected and tabulated for loan or hire to members and others as "aids to an appreciation of art." The method adopted is the juxtaposition of selected works of art of all styles and periods—Chinese, Egyptian, Italian, modern French—which show either a similar or a contrasted treatment of a similar subject or a similarity of design in two widely differing periods or styles, or which afford in some way good illustrations of particular æsthetic points. Each photograph has a note with a suggestion of its æsthetic significance, the object being to explain how works of art should be looked at and to remove the very ordinary misconception that the importance of a work of art lies in its power to reproduce or represent. The photographs themselves are extremely good, and form a fascinating introduction to the study of painting and sculpture. The Arts League of Service has also a system of lectures with lantern slides, founded on the same principle, and lectures for children, one of these being in the form of a fantastic legend, another on Animals in Art, with carefully chosen illustrations.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Easter Sunday, April 17.—

Mr. J. H. Oldham on "The Meaning of Easter," at the Indian Students' Union, 5.

Monday, April 18.—

Mr. Rafael Sabatini's "Scaramouche," at the Garrick.

"Hamlet," at the Old Vic, 7.30.

Shakespeare Birthday Festival begins, Stratford-on-Avon.

Tuesday, April 19.—

"The Vagabond King" (musical version of Mr. Justin H. McCarthy's "If I were King"), at the Winter Garden.

Sir John Forbes-Robertson on "An Actor's View of Shakespeare," at the New Theatre.

Wednesday, April 20.—

"On Approval," at the Fortune Theatre.

Thursday, April 21.—

"Marigold," at the Kingsway.

Mr. Humbert Wolfe reading his own Poems, at the Poetry Book-Shop, 6.

Friday, April 22.—

"The Merchant of Venice," broadcast from 2LO.
OMICRON.

THEY KEEP ON TALKING

THEY keep on talking it over and over,
Buzzing like bees in a field of clover:
But he lies quiet, and never heeds them
Who've all come now, when least he needs them.

Why he did it, they wonder and wonder,
Muttering and mumbling like far-off thunder—
Why he did it, and what the reason—
Trouble at home, or just the bad season?

Or, happen, some scandal? With noddles together,
They wonder if she had a hand in . . . or whether . . .
But he lies quiet, and does not hear them
Who've come too late for him to fear them.

They keep on buzzing of something hidden—
Bluebottle-flies aswarm on a midden
Till muckraking minds are fuddled and gory—
Yet only the dead man knows the story.

WILFRID GIBSON.

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REVIEWS

"BRITISH HYPOCRISY"

Lord Grey under Weltkrieg. Ein Schlüssel zum Verständnis der Britischen Amtlichen Aktenpublication über dem Kriegausbruch, 1914. Von HERMANN LUZ. (Deutsche-Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte in Berlin, W.8.)

THIS is one of the best books yet published about the origins of the war. The author has studied carefully all the immense literature, documentary and other; and, unlike many German propagandists, in rectifying the baseless charge that his countrymen are solely responsible for the war, he does not forget, or slur over, their essential contribution. In detail there are points where his judgment may be challenged. But the general case is, and will remain, much as he states it.

It is not, however, with the general case that we shall here concern ourselves. Dr. Luz arranges his material round the figure of Sir Edward Grey; and his view of that statesman is, or should be, of interest to Englishmen. For it raises the general question what that quality is that foreigners call "British hypocrisy." Viscount Grey, as is generally admitted, is the best type of English gentleman. In his appearance and bearing, in everything he writes and says, he gives the impression of simple straightforward rectitude. What then, if anything, is wrong? His book "Twenty-Five Years" must have surprised most readers who have studied the subject by its apparent ignorance of the mass of evidence which has been pouring out since the war ended. But that may be attributed to the failure of his sight, for which everyone must feel sympathy and regret. Further, it is clear that, throughout his term of office, he was obsessed by a belief in the aggressiveness of Germany, actual or potential, and the absence of aggressiveness in France and even in Russia. That he was wrong in this the evidence accumulating makes daily more and more clear. But there was nothing dishonest or insincere in his conviction; and again and again German statesmen, or their melodramatic Kaiser, appeared to give countenance to it. The belief was, of course, a misfortune for Europe; but it was but part of the whole complex in which that miserable continent was involved and from which it has not yet extricated itself. It could not by itself have provoked the curious reaction to Viscount Grey which is noticeable in so much that has been written about him by foreign critics. What does provoke it?

To answer that question satisfactorily a volume might be required as long as that of Dr. Luz. But a couple of examples may indicate the point. In the early summer of 1914 Sir Edward was induced, by the French and Russians, to set going conversations between British and Russian naval officers, with a view to an Anglo-Russian naval convention. The news leaked out, and disquieted both the German Government and those members of the House of Commons who attached value to good relations with Germany. Sir Edward accordingly was asked in the House what truth there was in the rumours. He replied that "there were no unpublished agreements which would restrict or hamper the freedom of the Government or of Parliament to decide whether or no Great Britain should participate in a war." . . . "No such negotiations," he said, "are in progress, and none are likely to be entered into, so far as I can judge." Defending this answer in his "Twenty-Five Years" Viscount Grey writes: "This answer is absolutely true. The criticism to which it is open is that it does not answer the question put to me. That is undeniable." But he omits to say that in the course of his answer occurs the phrase: "that answer covers both the questions on the paper." These words, so Dr. Luz insists, imply that he is answering the questions. Is that the case? We will leave the question to the casuists.

In any case, the German Government, it is said, were not deceived. Apparently they were not. But, then, who was? If Sir Edward was speaking a language intelligible to diplomats, but not to the public, who was to be taken in? There

seems only one possible answer—the mass of the people in his own and in other countries. Defenders will hasten to point out that there are some questions which, in the international anarchy, it is not safe to answer. That, of course, is true. But then, what happens to the honesty of Ministers?

The second example to which we will refer occurred in the midst of the crisis preceding the great war. At the last moment, everything depended upon the mobilizations; and the main point of the German polemic is, as is well known, that the Russian mobilization finally precipitated the war. In that controversy everything depends upon dates. We now have these, and we know that the Russian mobilization preceded the Austrian, and, *a fortiori*, the German. But it is not always realized that this fact was known at the time to our Foreign Office, as the British documents now show. For the military attaché in St. Petersburg telegraphed to the War Office on July 31st: "Notices posted up at 4 a.m. on July 31st, ordering general mobilization." This dispatch was omitted from the British Blue-book published in 1914, and was printed for the first time in the volume of documents published last year. The order for Russian mobilization, as we now know, was issued at 6 p.m. on July 30th; that for Austria at 11.30 a.m. on July 31st; and the German proclamation of "Kriegsgefahr" not till the afternoon of the same day. It is hardly conceivable that the telegram to the War Office was not communicated to the Foreign Office. Thus, Sir Edward must have known the real order of priority in mobilization. Yet no reference to that fact appears in the preface to the Collected Documents of 1915; nor was the telegram there published which would have betrayed it. Now the Germans attach a major importance to the mobilization of Russia, because, in their opinion, it was this which precipitated the war, at a time when it might, and would, have been prevented. And when they find that the true order of priority was known to the British Government, and that this knowledge was not made public, they draw their own conclusions.

These examples may serve to illustrate the charge brought, by even reasonable Germans, against Viscount Grey. They are not exhaustive, but they are sufficient for our purpose. I do not propose to rub in the moral, so far as he himself is concerned. He was caught in a system for which he was not responsible, and which makes impossible, in any statesman of any country, honesty and good faith, as commonly understood by decent men in private life. That was his tragedy. But the case of Lord Grey is only one example, the more striking just because of his character, of what is commonly called by foreigners British hypocrisy. No charge is more resented by the British, for no people are more conscious of virtue. But it is precisely in this consciousness that the quality resides. An Englishman turns a blind eye to everything which it would be inconvenient to see. He does it with so much success that he really comes to believe that he has never seen the inconvenient fact. But in truth he has seen it, and suppressed it. Other people may have bad consciences. They may be openly cynical; they may be defiant; or even, like Bethman-Hollweg, they may have the frankness to say: "We are doing wrong, but we can't help ourselves." Never so an Englishman! He is always doing right, by definition; for to him Right means what he does.

One word in conclusion. Dr. Luz ends his book with a passionate appeal for a public inquiry into the causes of the war, all Governments to contribute all the information at their disposal. Lord Grey is reported by Mr. Page to have expressed during the war the same desire. But he now tells us not to worry too much about origins; a view congenial to most Englishmen, and naturally enough. They have got their loot, and they do not want to be troubled with inquiries as to its justification. But they can hardly expect the same attitude from their defeated antagonists. And Dr. Luz is probably right that there will be no moral appeasement in Europe until this question has been laid, once for all, formally and conclusively to rest.

G. LOWES DICKINSON.

THE ECONOMICS OF AGRICULTURE

Politics and the Land. By C. DAMPIER-WHETHAM. (Cambridge University Press. 6s.)

WE are all familiar with that most wretched type of book which seeks to insinuate the narrowest propaganda or polemics under the guise of a scientific study. There is a rarer type of book in which the relationship between appearance and reality is almost exactly reversed. It sometimes happens that a man of knowledge and grasp and discerning judgment is provoked by the crudities of current nostrums to write a polemical tract, and yet is possessed so strongly by an innate detachment and desire for truth as to produce a work of the utmost value, apart altogether from the merits of the immediate controversy. Mr. Dampier-Whetham has written such a book. His controversial target is the "Green Book"; and he discharges his polemical task with great effectiveness. But it is possible to take the view that he has failed to establish his case on the main issues of that controversy, and yet to hold that he has written perhaps the most valuable short work that has yet appeared on the economics of British agriculture.

Mr. Whetham makes it his main complaint against the authors of the "Green Book" and land reformers generally that they build their plans on a crude and false diagnosis of our agricultural troubles. They are obsessed with the question of tenure, and attribute all our ills to landlordism, to the farmer's insecurity of tenure, and the like, disregarding the less obvious but far more powerful economic factors. Mr. Whetham gives an admirably lucid analysis of these governing economic conditions. In the first place, the very fact that agriculture is the oldest of all industries and is the principal occupation of primitive societies sets limits to what can be expected:—

"Peasant husbandry is still responsible for a large part of the agricultural output of the world. In spite of all that we hear of the benefits of smallholdings, the standard of life of these peasant husbandmen is low, in most parts of the world lower than that of our agricultural labourers, and it depresses the standard of those with whom they compete."

It is not easy, therefore, for British agriculture to fulfil the two criteria, which some reformers simultaneously demand of it, (1) to offer to its workers a standard of living comparable with that of the British artisan, and (2) to maintain a volume of employment and an output of food per acre comparable with that of the most intensively farmed areas of Europe. In the new food-producing countries of the American continent, where the agricultural worker has a comparatively high standard of living, output, though higher per man, is very much lower per acre than it is in Britain. This is no mere coincidence. The law of diminishing returns is not a myth, but a reality of an obstinately fundamental kind. The more intensively we try to farm, the more difficult must it become to do so profitably.

The troubles of British agriculture during the last few years have been largely due, however, to another set of general economic factors—namely, monetary deflation, with its uneven incidence as between "sheltered" and "unsheltered" trades. There is a time-lag "between expenditure and receipts in farming operations," greater, in Mr. Whetham's judgment, than the corresponding lag in most industries, which makes a falling price-level especially prejudicial to agriculture. No industry is, therefore, so dependent for its stability upon a stable standard of value, and none has suffered more severely from the deflation of recent years. None, again, provides so simple an illustration of the way in which the comparative success of the sheltered trades in maintaining their wages and prices amid general deflation aggravates the difficulties of the unsheltered ones; for building costs form a very high proportion of the costs of farm equipment, and there is particularly striking disparity between the rise in building costs and in agricultural prices. Yet in no industry is the importance of the movements of the general price-level so little appreciated. Mr. Whetham expounds this part of this thesis admirably.

Having thus analyzed our agricultural troubles, Mr. Whetham turns to examine the charges brought against the landowner:—

"By voluntarily or involuntarily taking lower real rents, landowners are now bearing the chief burden of the agricultural depression and carrying the industry through its

troubles. To act thus as a buffer to absorb economic shocks is one of the functions of the landowner. The fact that he is performing this function explains why he is now so poor. But it also explains why agriculture, with all its troubles, is in far less parlous case than some other unsheltered industries."

Economically, the landlord system, so far from being a burden on agriculture, works out as a useful arrangement for bringing it outside help. The price of agricultural land is, in the majority of cases to-day, no more than the replacement value of the buildings and other equipment "with nothing for the land itself." Rents, of course, are on a still lower basis, and represent decidedly less than a fair rate of interest on the replacement cost of the equipment of the farm. Is it not absurd, then, to quarrel with the element of "amenity" value in the price of land, which accounts for this disparity? The amenity value "is really an important factor in past and present agricultural economics. Without it less capital than at present would be available":—

"In buying average agricultural land a landowner pays for its equipment, and then lets it at a figure which brings in a bare 4 per cent. It is not that the price of English land is too high, but that the rent is too low. There is much talk about agricultural credit. It seems to be overlooked that landowners are lending the capital value of their holdings to their tenants at less than the market rate of interest. . . . The landowner gets what he wants in well-earned satisfaction, the tenant gains, and the nation benefits. Why disturb what all unprejudiced observers, and some even who are prejudiced against the landowner, agree is an admirable arrangement?"

We shall not attempt, however, in this review to follow Mr. Whetham in further detail in his controversy with the "Green Book." It is possible to agree with him that the landowner possessed of large resources and inspired by a tradition of leadership is still fulfilling an extremely useful function, and that it would be the height of folly in a period of great difficulties for agriculture to go out of our way to upset this arrangement. It remains possible to hold that the authors of the "Green Book" are right in their contention that over an increasingly wide area the landowner system is breaking down under the pressure of such forces as the Death Duties, and that it is important, where this happens, to devise some more satisfactory substitute than an unorganized drift into reluctant and under-capitalized occupying ownership. But, whatever view we take upon these issues, everyone who writes or speaks about agriculture, everyone indeed who is engaged in conducting it, would be the better for a careful study of Mr. Dampier-Whetham's book.

LITERARY ESSAYS

Second Essays on Literature. By EDWARD SHANKS. (Collins. 16s.)

WHEN a critic finds it necessary to precede his work by an explanation of his method the reader may be led to suspect that this method has not been made clear by the work. Yet there is no obscurity about Mr. Shanks's critical method, which consists in examining authors, not by the limelight of enthusiasm, but by the quieter and more comprehensive light of day. As his preface states, his intention is "purely analytical, theoretic, and, above all, descriptive." Mr. Shanks is essentially a temperate critic; his studies of literary men are free from all straining after sensational views, and from obtrusion of personal prejudice and preference. This is not to imply in them any lack of interest or vitality. Their value lies mainly in the subtlety of insight whereby the many characteristics of a writer's work are correlated and presented as factors of a unifying personality. For Mr. Shanks is concerned not so much with achievement as with the temperament and mentality of which this is the expression. Thus, although his essays are too short to deal exhaustively with their subjects, he does, in many cases, succeed in crystallizing some aspect which leads to an understanding of the whole.

More especially is this noticeable in the revaluations of nineteenth-century poets. Discussing Browning, Mr. Shanks traces the confusion and incomprehensibility of much of his poetry to a peculiar dread of exposing his personal feelings undisguised. "There was a contradiction in him. Within his heart an immensely strong instinct of reticence was at

war with his natural exuberance of self-expression. . . . The labyrinth of his poetry is a labyrinth he made so that he might hide himself in it." Oscar Wilde, also, is seen in terms of a contradiction. "He was artificial and insincere; but there was something genuine in his artificiality and something vital in his insincerity."

In applying this treatment Mr. Shanks is at times tempted towards over-simplification. In a paper occasioned by the centenary of Shelley he sums up the poet as "the perpetual adolescent." While the phrase contains a truth, it leaves more to be said in qualification; without it the conclusion savours of the ingenious rather than the inevitable.

On the other hand, the studies of Mr. Kipling and Mr. Galsworthy show discrimination and discernment, and the portraits, complete in all essentials, are presented in a limited space. The least satisfactory essay is that on Mr. Lawrence. Beginning with the statement that "Mr. D. H. Lawrence lives at the bottom of a dark pit," it ends without having introduced any appreciable quantity of daylight into the darkness. In the course of it, long passages are quoted in illustration of the writer's literary style; though far less quotation is found to suffice in dealing with such an eminent stylist as Conrad. One is driven towards the conclusion that Mr. Shanks, baffled by his subject, is quoting to fill up space; returning constantly to these outer manifestations from pursuit of an essence which evades his analysis. Yet he conveys something; even if it be only the sense that he is forced to grope because Mr. Lawrence himself is groping. Compared with the other essays it is interesting, too, as indicating that where Mr. Shanks excels is in the mature consideration of a field more or less wholly mapped out. His method is less well adapted to the elucidation of genius which refuses to "stay put" because it is still undergoing development.

SYLVA NORMAN.

SLEUTHS

- Murder in the Maze.** By J. J. CONNINGTON. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)
The Venetian Key. By ALLEN UPWARD. (Faber & Gwyer. 7s. 6d.)
The Murder at Crome House. By G. D. H. and M. COLE. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)
Mr. Fortune, Please. By H. C. BAILEY. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)
The Mystery of the Boule Cabinet. By BURTON E. STEVENSON. (Nash & Grayson. 3s. 6d.)

THE crystal-pure, classic detective story is almost as rare as the phoenix. The sole interest must lie in the detection of the criminal, and yet, though all the relevant facts must be given, the reader must fail to detect him, and must be thrilled with amazement when the revelation is made at the end—the very end. "Trent's Last Case" and "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" are museum pieces of this art, so difficult, and, in its perfection, so beautiful.

But even if the severity of perfection is wanting, a very good book may be made with the addition of other ingredients besides pure deduction. The excitement of adventure, as in "The Villa Rose," the cold thrill of an eerie atmosphere, as in "The Lodger," or the terrifying perception that this is the kind of thing that lurks behind an Armstrong or a Crippen case—these impure elements often make up an absorbing novel of crime.

The first three books in my list—for of the last two I shall speak briefly, at the end—belong to the second category. They are none of them perfect, but they are all good, and well worth reading by a serious student of detective fiction. All three of them obey the first canon of this class of writing—there is no legerdemain—the sleuth hides nothing up his sleeve—and from the given facts the criminal can be spotted by the aid of putting two and two together, provided the reader also has a nodding acquaintance with the psychology and habits of detective writers. Indeed, the probability is that the reader will do his spotting rather early in the day; and that is the weakness of all three books. The secret in each case is a bit easy to guess—"Murder in the Maze" is the easiest, and "The Murder at Crome House" is the hardest; but even when you have fixed on the criminal, and are sure you are right, you will find plenty of amusement in the book.

"The Venetian Key" is the third book of crime in which Dr.—now Sir Frank—Tarleton is the hero sleuth. It is pitched in a lighter key than the rather terrifying "House of Sin," and is, indeed, an amusing book. The doctor's interview with the Ranees, his entry into the Aldwych Hotel decked out in his Slavonian order, the mysterious Mexican, and the Spanish señora all give a cheerful flavour of romance to this story of a bad man's murder.

"The Murder at Crome House" is the very opposite in atmosphere. The tone throughout is coldly matter-of-fact, the chief sleuth is a university professor and "this thrilling experience," says the dust-cover "might have happened to anyone. What would you have done?" Yet somehow the effect is not quite right. We are never properly convinced that these things happened to an actual Mr. Flint, and as for Anstey, he is one of those adventurous, foolhardy sailors whom one really doesn't meet except in novels. But that doesn't matter to the story, which is quite a good one, especially at the end where there is an exciting climax.

"Murder in the Maze" is perhaps the most enjoyable book of the three. Sir Clinton Driffield, the Chief Constable, is everything that a detective should be. "Only his eyes failed to fit in with the rest of his conventional appearance; and even then he had disciplined as far as possible. Normally they had a bored expression; but at times the mask slipped aside and betrayed the activity of the brain behind them." It is delightful to watch the brainy activity of Sir Clinton from the moment of his arrival to the moment in which the unscrupulous and crafty villain is unmasked. But why, oh why, may we not have an arrest as the proper and natural conclusion? Are we so humanitarian that even in these fantastic, impossible yarns, we cannot contemplate a murder trial? In none of these books is the murderer brought to justice. Oh these suicides! Oh these sentimental policemen!

Mr. Fortune is the hero of several books by Mr. Bailey. This one, "Mr. Fortune, Please," consists of six short stories, sometimes exciting, sometimes facetious. "The Mystery of the Boule Cabinet" is a cheap reprint of an excellent detective story first published in 1915, and since then dramatized and produced in London. This is the only American book in the list.

MARJORIE STRACHEY.

MEDIÆVAL EUROPE

- Life and Work in Mediæval Europe, Fifth to Fifteenth Century.**
 By P. BOISSONNADE, Professor in the University of Poitiers.
 Translated with an Introduction by EILEEN POWER, M.A.,
 Litt.D. (Kegan Paul. 16s.)

PROFESSOR P. BOISSONNADE is an erudite mediævalist. Readers of his "Du Nouveau sur la Chanson de Roland" (1923) will have admired the skill with which innumerable details were marshalled in support of a thesis, while deploring the bias of uncompromising nationalism which seemed to result in special pleading. In reading Professor Boissonnade and others of his school, one is almost led to the conclusion that France is the inheritor of Rome, and that Rome and France could do no wrong. That Germania which Professor Ker taught us to respect and to admire is a collection of destructive and ignorant barbarians for Professor Boissonnade. An older school of mediævalists (including Renan and Gaston Paris) perhaps exaggerated the Teutonic elements in mediæval European culture. Professor Boissonnade will have none of it. Just as he laboured to prove that the Song of Roland contained no Germanic elements, had, in fact, nothing to do with Charlemagne, but was the result of tenth- and eleventh-century French Crusades in Spain, so this book on mediæval economics seeks to persuade us that the recovery and development of Europe after the collapse of the Roman Empire was entirely due to the survival of Roman elements. He says little or nothing of Roman corruption and decadence, while "the Germans had remained beasts of prey." He describes the destruction wrought by the barbarians in terms which recall the hysteria of ten years ago. No one doubts that the collapse of the Empire was a calamity, but was not that collapse due as much to

interior decay as to exterior violence, and were not the "barbarians" a regenerative as well as a destructive force? These vast problems cannot be decided by a reviewer in a paragraph, but it is at least necessary to warn readers that Professor Boissonnade adopts rather extreme views and to hint that his views are to some extent coloured by a Gallo-Roman bias.

But Professor Boissonnade is less concerned with the collapse of the Empire than with the economic and social history of Europe from the fifth to the fifteenth century. Drawing upon a profound and extensive erudition which he has long meditated and digested, Professor Boissonnade has composed a lucid panorama of a thousand years of labour, agriculture, and commerce. The coherence and lucidity with which immense masses of facts have been reduced to intelligible order are deserving of the highest praise. This book is as dramatically vivid as a good film, and under the guidance of this skilful producer the spectator alternately deplores the ignorant poverty of the West in the tenth century and exults over the opulence of Byzantium, watches with breathless interest the gradual colonization of the Western deserts and the wresting of commercial supremacy from the declining Eastern Empire. What an excellent thing is commerce, cries the dazzled reader, and would that I might traffic in "beautiful silks, fine cloths, pieces of goldsmiths' work, carved ivories, delicate glass, onyx cups, chased and enamelled vases, mosaics, fruits, delicate wines, and other choice and luxurious articles." Even tallow and hides might satisfy this momentary cupidity in those who do not aspire to handle masses of gold coins like the eighty-five great bankers of fourteenth-century Florence, or to revel in the stupendous capitalist exploitation of the great Flemish merchants.

In a few lines it is quite impossible to summarize Professor Boissonnade's extensive theme, which is almost as epic as the tale of the Americas. In this handbook he has traced the outline of a thousand years of civilization in Europe. He has described the life and labour of these thousand years in the Byzantine Empire, Italy, Sicily, France, Spain, Germany, Eastern Europe, the Low Countries, and England. This story falls naturally into three epochs. The first is the period of Roman decadence, Barbarian inroads, poverty and desolation, from the fifth to the tenth centuries, an age of slavery, misery, and turbulence, enlightened by the "abortive Renaissance" of Charlemagne and the economic activities of the Church. The second stretches from the tenth to the middle of the fourteenth century and represents "the golden age" of mediæval civilization, an extraordinary advance on the preceding epoch. The Black Death, the Hundred Years' War, vast political and social revolutions mark the third epoch. Labour unrest, strikes, associations of workers, rebellions and revolutions, attempts at proletarian dictatorship and even Communism occurred in many parts of Europe, where dense urban populations engaged in organized industry revolted against a swollen and unscrupulous capitalism. Even the peasants revolted. And these disturbances served to pave the way for the Renaissance despots, who forcibly restored order.

M. Boissonnade's economic point of view is typically French. The communistic tendencies of the early Germanic tribes are exceedingly distasteful to him; they are synonymous with barbarism. He delights in the Roman passion for private property, loves capital, and admires those States which (like modern France) have an innumerable small *bourgeoisie* of peasant-owners, craftsmen working on their own, and moderately opulent merchants. He dislikes "big business" as much as the Americans love it. That is why he admires so much the temporary equilibrium of the thirteenth century, when few men were very rich and most men had enough. In a sense, that is the ideal, but how apply it on the world-scale of modern commerce? The similarity between the modern industrial crisis and that of the fourteenth century is striking, not to say alarming. Even practical men might consult Professor Boissonnade's vivid descriptions of that tumultuous epoch and ponder whether there is any solution except the crude and violent alternatives of the *jacquerie* or despotism. It should be noticed that Miss Eileen Power has translated this volume with great ability and exactness.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

MODERN POETRY

Beauty the Pilgrim. By GERALD GOULD. (Benn. 3s. 6d.)

Poems. By CAMILLA DOYLE. (Benn. 6s.)

The Dispassionate Pilgrim. By COLIN D. B. ELLIS. (Blackwell. 3s. 6d.)

Meleager. By R. C. TREVELYAN. (Hogarth Press. 5s.)

The modern poet is generally nothing if not deft, and Mr. Gould has a deftness in weaving lyrics better than that of most of his contemporaries. That, however, is saying little or nothing in his favour. Here are eleven lyrics by the author of that much-anthologized "Wander-Lust." Their subjects range from:—

"One died upon a lonely Cross
—Lonely enough with two beside,"

to the portrait of a woman, a dying seagull, a mountain eagle, the mortality of trees, and some epitaphs. In each case the result is a neat, shining, and often lovely little poem, but in each case there is a lamentable lack of passion and fire. Every time the reason for this is Mr. Gould's conception—his themes are slight and thin, his vision lacks intensity, and his head is never lost in the stars. Not one of the subjects can we imagine crying and moaning to burst from his breast and then, having escaped, setting up an immediate and marvellous tumult in the bright air.

What is true of Mr. Gould is also applicable to Camilla Doyle, except that the latter is rarely as deft. There are many more poems than in "Beauty the Pilgrim." Generally they are longer, many of them are little narratives, and the range of subject is wider. It passes from "Motor-ing Past Inns" to swans and woodpeckers, cuckoos, Jezebel, Medusa, a ghost, a portrait or two, and, ironically enough, fireworks. Any possibility, however, of Camilla Doyle making an explosion or an earthquake in the desert of modern English poetry seems extremely remote. Like Mr. Gould, she lacks passion, and she cannot expect the majestic heat of a volcano to rise from a little careless play with a burning-glass and a heap of straw. Nevertheless, if she is not as constantly careless as this:—

"Comes down askew, then waltzes till
She must reverse or else feel ill,"

she may burn her fingers with considerable profit.

Colin D. B. Ellis, dispassionate though he also may be, is another pilgrim crossing the desert, and as such is entitled to respect. He has also written poems of which the titles are in Latin. That gives him an air of learning. Then he can write triolets, which proves he is clever and versatile. He can polish off "Woman" in a quatrain, but needs twenty lines, with all the naivety in the world, to sum up "Youth." He is occasionally humorous. He is not yet to be commended, but he is nevertheless to be remembered. One feels he possesses a deep subconsciousness, into which he occasionally delves with surprising success, and that if only he can sink a deep well there, may yet be responsible for a green and fertile oasis in that accursed desert where poetasters die like flies.

"Meleager" is not a book of lyrics. It is a play, in two acts, in which there are only four characters, Atalanta, Meleager, Parthenopæus, and the Ghost of Althæa, and which is a tragedy written in unrhymed verse. The theme is alive with difficulties, and a lesser or greater poet than Mr. Trevelyan might have felt impelled to deal with them in not less than three or even four acts. He, however, by a process which may strike the undiscerning as absurdly simple, sets out everything beautifully, austere, and with dignity and pity in fifty pages. It is a worthy theme, one on which a man might justly expend his best, as I have no doubt Mr. Trevelyan has done in order to produce a really notable and refreshing example of that most difficult form, the verse-play. His is the true, sincere passion of the man with a vision, who knows the power of little things, not so much in themselves, but as the pawns which alter destinies. He is capable of creating the truly thrilling atmosphere of poetry in a stroke or two:—

"Look southward yonder, mark how the smooth sea
Is scrawled with scurrying catspaw gusts of wind."

There are faults, but the faults of tragedy are easy to forgive. "Meleager" is an impressive, beautiful and memorable play.

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

Further Contributions to the Theory and Technique of Psycho-analysis. By SÁNDOR FERENCZI. (Hogarth Press, and Institute of Psycho-analysis. 28s.)

DR. FERENCZI has contributed more to the theory of psycho-analysis than anyone, except, of course, Professor Freud and, perhaps, the late Dr. Karl Abraham, of Berlin. He is a most industrious clinical observer, an acute, fertile, and singularly bold thinker. If his interpretations do not always carry conviction, and if he sometimes seems (though this is not conspicuous in the present collection) to speculate upon insecure foundations, there can be no doubt that he has contributed a great deal which has solid merits, and he is never dull. Pre-eminently he possesses that natural insight into psycho-analytic material without which the soundest critical judgment will carry the would-be investigator but a negligible distance.

The present collection, which has been compiled by Dr. Rickman and contains ninety contributions of greatly varying length, is very fairly representative of the author's talents and achievements, though there is nothing so outstanding as the essay on "The Development of the Sense of Reality" included in an earlier collection published in America. A large number of the essays are too technical for the lay reader, but some are of very general interest. One of these is "Suggestion and Psycho-analysis" (1912) in which the author combats the common reproach that the psycho-analyst works by "suggesting" ideas to his patients. Dr. Ferenczi successfully shows that the whole nature of the analytic therapy is the very antithesis of "suggestive" therapy as ordinarily understood. As Freud himself freely admits, suggestion plays a very real and important part in the analytic therapy, and this has become clearer with the fuller understanding, during recent years, of the nature of the "transference situation" which is the essence of the analytic treatment. But suggestive therapy—"healing by suggestion"—is actually more prominent in almost every other form of psycho-therapy than in psycho-analysis; and in a great deal of the ordinary treatment by physicians of patients whose troubles are not regarded as primarily mental the effects produced are also due to suggestion to a larger extent than in the psycho-analytic therapy itself. No one with first-hand experience of analysis and also of the ordinary relation of consultants and general practitioners with their patients will doubt this fact, though many eminent people who ought to know better are still fond of dismissing psycho-analysis as "mainly dependent for its results upon suggestion."

Dr. Ferenczi is well known in the psycho-analytic world as having been one of the leading exponents a few years ago of what was called "active" technique—a modification of the original orthodox technique consisting essentially in issuing certain injunctions and prohibitions to the patient in certain situations, or sometimes announcing that the analysis would cease on a certain date, whether a "cure" had been effected or not. The object of these modifications was to hasten the process of analysis by "forcing" certain psychical situations which threatened or realized stagnation of the analytic process. Three papers in the present collection deal with this subject, and they are among the most interesting. Dr. Ferenczi (who, it is fair to say, never advocated "activity" all the time and in all cases) is now inclined to think that he went too far in certain respects, and that the intervention he at one time recommended is often dangerous, and may lead to a breakdown of the treatment. But it is coming to be generally recognized that the analyst never is, and in fact cannot be, wholly passive, and the effects of his "activity," the kind of intervention desirable, its times and seasons and its precise effects under different circumstances are coming to be more and more clearly understood, so that the active technique is beginning to take a recognized, though always subordinate, place in analytic practice.

The translation of Dr. Ferenczi's essays is very satisfactory on the whole, but in places not quite so good as in previous volumes of this series.

A. G. TANSLEY.

ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

THE following books bearing on world politics have just appeared: "The World Policy of Germany, 1890-1912," by Otto Hammann (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.); "Europe and the East," by Norman Dwight Harris (Allen & Unwin, 20s.); "The History of Reparations," by Carl Bergmann (Benn, 21s.).

Two unusual books by Medical Authorities are "Interpreters of Nature," Essays by Sir George Newman (Faber & Gwyer, 12s. 6d.), and "A Doctor's Views on Life," by William J. Robinson (Allen & Unwin, 16s.).

Messrs. Jonathan Cape publish "America Comes of Age," a French Analysis, by André Siegfried (12s. 6d.); Messrs. Putnam, a new edition, in two volumes, of "American Orations," edited with an Introduction by Alexander Johnston (25s.); and Messrs. Ginn "Foreign Policies of the United States," by Professor James Quayle Dealey (12s. 6d.).

The "Abilities of Man: their Nature and Measurement," by C. Spearman is published by Messrs. Macmillan (16s.); "The World of Imagery," by Stephen J. Brown, S.J., by Messrs. Kegan Paul (12s. 6d.); and "Modern Humanists Reconsidered," by J. M. Robertson, by Messrs. Watts (7s. 6d.).

"The Life of Buddha," by Edward J. Thomas, is a volume in the History of Civilization series (Kegan Paul, 12s. 6d.). Two new volumes on the Occult are "Clairvoyance and Materialization," by Dr. Gustave Geley (Fisher Unwin, 30s.); and "Leaves from a Psychic Notebook," by H. A. Dallas (Rider, 5s.).

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Advertisement Writing. By GILBERT RUSSELL. (Benn. 8s. 6d.)

Mr. Gilbert Russell has written a stimulating and extremely valuable book. It is sub-titled: "A Guide to the Art and Practice of Copy Writing," but it is something more than that. It is in fact an exceptionally clear statement of the case for advertising in relation to marketing and modern business. There are so many people who pose as carping critics of advertising who confine their criticism to ill-displayed advertisements, but who ignore the broad questions of salesmanship and marketing. This book treats with these broad questions first in a very simple though none the less powerful fashion before treating with such questions of technique as the right sales argument, the forms of "copy," and so on. The author does not burke such unpleasant questions as the relations between a copy writer and his client, and the anomalies of the present advertising agency position. He deals with these vexed questions in a courageous manner and concludes with an extremely valuable and suggestive chapter entitled "Who Should Become an Advertisement Writer." All would-be aspirants to fame in advertising would be well advised to read this chapter, and everyone who holds any views at all on advertising, whether favourable or adverse, would find something of interest in this book—probably the best book on advertising since Thomas Russell's "Commercial Advertising."

Europa, 1927. (Routledge. 15s.)

This is a most useful annual survey of international economic and social conditions and a "European Who's Who." It is edited by Michael Farbmán, Ramsay Muir, and Hugh Spender. It contains an immense amount of information. For instance, if you turn up the Permanent Court of International Justice, you find a short biography of the eleven judges and four deputy judges.

Œuvres complètes de Gérard de Nerval. Publiées sous la direction de ARISTIDE MARIE, JULES MARSAN, and EDOUARD CHAMPION. Vols. I. and II. and Appendix. (Champion.)

The Maison Champion is once more making civilization its debtor by the publication of a complete Gérard de Nerval, similar in form to the edition of Stendhal, which is now at least half completed. Gérard de Nerval is an author greatly in need of an edition; much of his writings is quite unprcurable, and the rest is only to be obtained in tiresome little editions issued by different publishers. The author is therefore still neglected, and most people will, when this edition is complete, be amazed by the amount of hard work done by this supposedly incompetent lunatic. The first of these

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volumes consists of a very thorough bibliography, with an excellent introduction and copious notes. If there are any errors or omissions the present reviewer is unable to mention them. Then follow "Petits Châteaux de Bohème" and "La Bohème Galante," the first of the series of reminiscences, which were to flower in the extraordinary delusions of Sylvie and Aurélia. The appendix consists of a really brilliant essay on Aurélia by M. Pierre Andiat, who shows many qualities of a first-rate detective in tracing the gradual growth, in the mind of the author, of this bizarre and, at first sight, almost unintelligible masterpiece. This edition will come out in batches of three volumes, being complete probably in fifteen, and, when the edition is completed, the editors will have not only performed a great service to a neglected author, one of the great writers of the middle of the century, but will even have added to the reputation of the "Maison Champion."

A History of the Pharaohs. By ARTHUR WEIGALL. Vol. II.—The Twelfth to the Eighteenth Dynasties. (Thornton Butterworth. 21s.)

The first part of Mr. Weigall's History was notable for the new arrangement of Egyptian chronology put forward. In the present volume, which continues along the same lines, the new material is, as before, almost exclusively connected with the question of dating. Dealing with the obscure period of the Hyksos dynasties, the author has planned out what may be described as a working hypothesis in the grouping of the vast number of recorded Pharaohs whose reigns have to be fitted into a comparatively short space of years. Apart from this aspect, the period preceding the Eighteenth Dynasty remains an unfruitful one, yielding little to the historian beyond fragmentary inscriptions. Mr. Weigall's record and differentiation of these rulers is therefore unavoidably supplemented by conjecture. Nevertheless, the whole is a careful and painstaking work, though open to the objection that, while the general reader may find it too detailed, the Egyptologist may find it over-popularized.

A Garden in Wales. By A. T. JOHNSON. (Arnold. 16s.)

This is a book which all gardeners will find pleasant and most of them useful. Mr. Johnson's garden is not one of the western gardens which are paradise to the gardener, for 10 to 12 degrees of frost are not uncommon. But what he grows and the photographs of what he grows will make the mouths of many water and send them to the plant catalogues. His book is mainly concerned with what he has cultivated and what he has failed to cultivate. It is packed with names of plants and shrubs and with information about them. But it is not dull, catalogic reading. For Mr. Johnson succeeds in getting his passion for gardening into the print.

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Mr. William Murdoch gives two charming Chopin pieces on the piano, Waltz in F major and Etude in A flat (10-in. record. D1567. 4s. 6d.). Antoni Sala, who is an admirable 'cellist, plays a piece from Sammartini and a pretty Allegretto of Boccherini (10-in. record. 4258. 3s.). Joseph Szigeti is also an accomplished performer; he plays two violin solos, "Le Printemps" of Milhaud and Dvorak's "Slavonic Dance" in E minor (12-in. record. L1963. 6s. 6d.).

Among vocal records one of the best is Eva Turner, soprano, singing the much sung "Vissi d'arte" from "Tosca" and "Voi la sapete" from "Cavalleria Rusticana" (12-in. record. L1836. 6s. 6d.). Mr. Hubert Eisdell, tenor, sings well two not very distinguished songs, "My Bird of April Days" and "Daphne" (10-in. record. D1566. 4s. 6d.). An interesting record is Tchaikowsky's "We praise, O Lord" and an old Cossack song of some violence, sung by the Don Cossack Choir (9186. 4s. 6d.). Denis Noble, baritone, sings "Muleteer of Malaga" and "Spirit Flower" (4260. 3s.), and Muriel Brunskill "Sink, Red Sun" and "Ye Banks of Allan Water" (4259. 3s.).

HOPE FOR THE ARMENIAN REMNANT

JOINT APPEAL FOR SETTLEMENT IN SYRIA.

NOT once nor twice in history the remnant of a nation has preserved for all time and for all men some gift which has been for the permanent enrichment of the world. Time and again the Armenian people has faced massacres and inhuman cruelty with fortitude and patience—and but a remnant now survives. If this people has no other gift for the world the spirit of its endurance and heroism is a challenge to our security and comfort, and a plea for our goodwill and support.

At the invitation of the League of Nations its High Commissioner for Refugees, in co-operation with the International Labour Office, has devised

A scheme for establishing 20,000 refugees

as a self-supporting peasantry on the fertile lands or the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon. This scheme has the entire goodwill and active co-operation of the French mandatory power. The inhabitants are well disposed towards the Armenians, and the situation assures a market for the settlers' produce.

This scheme will eventually solve the problem of the 86,000 Armenians in Syria.

Ten thousand are to be moved at once and ten thousand in the near future. Ample areas of land are available and further large numbers can later be absorbed.

The scheme is controlled by a Committee created by the International Labour Office, under the Presidency of Dr. Nansen, with M. Albert Thomas as Chairman, and with a membership of French, British, Italian, Swiss and Armenian representatives. It is estimated that the cost will be not less than £120,000, towards which £58,000 is in hand or in sight.

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Save the Children Fund, 26, Gordon Street, London, W.C.1.
Society of Friends (Armenia Committee), Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

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THE OWNER-DRIVER

A TYPICAL BRITISH PRODUCTION

A DURHAM correspondent who has had a short trial run in a six-cylinder Crossley fitted with a fabric saloon body asks if I know "whether there are any points about this car which call for criticism?"

On the contrary, it is a production which stands exceptionally high in my estimation. For many years I have been permissively in my professional capacity to roam through the Crossley works at will, and few people outside the business can have a more intimate knowledge of the work which has been done in the laboratory there during the past decade.

I was behind the scenes when Mr. W. D. Wishart designed the Crossley 19.6 h.p. four-cylinder engine, and with intense interest I followed the further experiments which led to the development of that power-unit and its appearance as the 20-70 h.p. Crossley. I have driven many excellent cars of British, Continental and American makes, but have yet to find a four-cylinder side-by-side valve engine of the same rating to compare with that "20-70." Every motorist who has been lucky enough to own one will agree with me that the man who designed it is a past-master at his job.

The new six-cylinder is no less remarkable. It has overhead valves, but the gear is so quiet that the engine ticks over as silently as one of the sleeve-valve type. It would be difficult to find anything better even in a far more expensive chassis. The clean lay-out and finish reflect infinite credit on designer and makers alike.

The whole chassis is a convincing proposition—sound as a bell of brass—and it is a perfect joy to take such a car over the exacting route on which all Crossley cars are tested. By the way, it is not generally known that every car sold from the Gorton works is entirely dismantled after undergoing the most severe tests. Each part is then critically inspected and after the car is rebuilt it is taken out again and subjected to tests which would qualify many automobiles for the scrap heap!

The only unfavourable comment I ever heard against the 20-70 Crossley came from a driver who hated cone-clutches. The six-cylinder Crossley does not leave room even for that hypercritical objection, because it has a single-plate clutch as sweet and as light as any dainty-footed lady could desire.

The same measure of refinement has been reached in the gears. This is, of course, most important, because nothing would be more aggravating than to find the silence of the engine and the fabric saloon body spoiled by a noisy gear-box.

Incidentally the Crossley people have retained their four-speed gear set, and in spite of everything that may be said by people who fit three speeds only, I insist that in hilly districts the four-speed box is tremendously appreciated. Let those who think otherwise spend a portion of their lives on the Pennine Range or in the Peak district of Derbyshire, where the Crossley "Six" is valued as it deserves to be for its intrinsic merits.

It is a British car—stately enough for a King (His Majesty has just bought one), but sturdy enough for the roughest going, as the Duke and Duchess of York have proved on their Australian and New Zealand tour.

If the edict went forth that all cars manufactured in this country for the next twelve months had to be of one size and design which make would you wish to see standardized?

Should any of our daily papers, tired of cross-word puzzles, offer a big prize for an answer to this question do not fill in your coupon until you have tried the Crossley "Six."

Although I am as keenly interested in coachwork as chassis I have not yet made up my mind whether the fabric saloon quite reaches my ideal, but certain members of the Crossley staff who have used these flexible bodies for years, declare that for the Owner-Driver there is nothing to touch them.

RAYNER ROBERTS.

Mr. Rayner Roberts has for many years been recognized as an exceptionally well-informed writer on motoring subjects, and his wide experience as an Owner-Driver is at the service of our readers. Communications should be addressed to the Motor Editor, THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, London, W.C.1.

THE STAMP COLLECTOR

A CORRESPONDENT has raised some pertinent questions, in fact, they may be taken as representative of the difficulties that arise with the majority of collectors who, having made a collection of postage stamps in their youth, have the inclination to recommence collecting on more serious lines.

This is an old problem, but has been much more complicated since the war because of the vastly increased output of stamps in all parts of the world. Owing to the break-up of many European States, for instance, the number of stamp-issuing countries has vastly increased, with the result that correspondingly proportionate perplexities and problems confront the stamp collector who with moderate means intends to make a good showing on a fairly scientific basis.

The first of our correspondent's three queries is given below, and we propose to deal with each in this and in our next article in as much detail as space will allow.

"Do you advise specializing on stamps of one country? If so, please suggest one or more suitable countries."

This query confronts every collector, beginner or otherwise, at some time or another. Undoubtedly, a general collection is more interesting, both in practice and theory. Its scope, it goes without saying, is vastly greater, its geographical, historical, and, we might say, its human interest is so vastly superior as to make it the ideal method of philatelic pursuit if it were not for obvious and indeed very serious difficulties.

Now that so many stamps are appearing weekly, and even daily, the task of keeping a collection of all countries of the world up to date and in order is almost beyond the time that the ordinary person who has only a certain amount of leisure to devote to the pursuit has available. Again, the outlay is a serious factor, and, indeed, if completeness is aimed at, this question of expense is very important, and, as a matter of fact, the necessary cash outlay is beyond anyone except the very rich. Therefore, we have two objections to general collecting: that is, the difficulty of finance and also the difficulty of arranging and housing the stamps even without counting the cost.

In spite of these difficulties, there is nothing, in our opinion, to equal in point of interest the general collection—and if absolute completeness is not aimed at and if the collector has plenty of leisure and a fair amount of money to invest, we should plump at once for "generalization."

For the average collector, however, a system of limited specialism is to be recommended. Most philatelists have of necessity to look very seriously on the investment side, and when the financial element enters it is better to buy few and good rather than many and low priced, no matter how fascinating the cheap stamps may be.

For those with serious capital to invest, there is nothing to beat the older issues of the British Colonies. These stamps can always be looked upon as a sound investment, and have for many years been increasing both in demand and value, and there is no doubt at all that this state of affairs will continue. They comprise some of the most beautiful examples of the stamp designer's and engraver's art, and, produced in times when the demand for stamps was by no means what it is to-day, many of these old stamps have an enhanced beauty due to being printed by tardy and expensive methods, whereas modern stamps—beautiful as no doubt many of them are—are turned out by rapid and less expensive processes which often tend to detract from the appearance of an otherwise beautiful stamp.

For the ordinary collector, with from £50 to £200 per annum to spend, we recommend the modern issues of the British Colonies, or a collection of post-war European countries, whilst a collection limited to the issues of one or two countries is to be commended. The "one country" collector is much in evidence nowadays. This is a very agreeable form of collecting, and to anyone contemplating such, we would suggest the stamps of Norway or Sweden, two countries whose issues are full of interest and which will always prove a source of continual enjoyment and fascination.

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

THE BUDGET—COMMONWEALTH LOAN—AUSTRALIA AND NEW YORK—CENTRAL PROVINCES.

FIRST thoughts of the Stock Exchange are not always very deep. A Budget that did not increase the income and super taxes, that added £15,000,000 to the £50,000,000 sinking fund, that did not impose so much taxation on tobacco as was feared, that provided a "bull" point for Dunlops and abolished the stamp duties on company amalgamations, was bound to be well received on Tuesday morning. The gilt-edged market was, in fact, strong, and industrials generally were cheerful. But second thoughts will probably please less. Trick financing is not a good substitute for statesmanship. Mr. Churchill by taking the remaining £12,000,000 from the Road Fund has used up his visible reserves. The raising of the Sinking Fund does not greatly help the gilt-edged market, seeing that the £12,000,000 appropriated for the Road Fund reserves means in effect the cancellation of that amount of Treasury bills held by the Government.

Let no one suppose that because the Commonwealth Government has followed the example of South Australia and Western Australia in publishing with its loan prospectus this week a few selected financial statistics, the fight for more information in connection with Australian borrowing has been won. The fight must go on until the information is made intelligible. No investor could possibly tell from the few details given of the public debt and expenditure of the Commonwealth in 1916 and 1926 whether Australia was over-borrowing or not. He might even be misled. He might easily assume that the figure of £56 as the "net public debt per head of population" referred to the public debt of the people of Australia. It refers, of course, only to the net debt of the Commonwealth Government. Taking Commonwealth and States together the debt per head for the Dominion works out at about £168. It seems essential in future prospectuses of Commonwealth Government loans to include a summary of the Commonwealth and States' finances. There is not yet one borrowing authority for the whole of Australia, but the Commonwealth Government, by publishing some telling details of States' finances, might force the States to agree to the Australian Loan Council co-ordinating the loans raised abroad as it already does the loans raised in Australia (excepting always those of New South Wales).

The present Commonwealth issue of £11,711,000 5 per cent. stock at 98 is for the conversion of the £12,750,000 5½ per cent. stock maturing on June 1st, £1,039,000 of which is being transferred to Australia. We do not suggest that this issue will not be successful. The Commonwealth Government has no other maturity this year either in London or in Australia. It goes out of its way in the prospectus to state that the National Debt Commission has allotted for the year ending June 30th next out of the Sinking Fund approximately 1 per cent. of the amount of Commonwealth securities outstanding in London for purchases on the London market. It adds, which is curious, that the "high standing of the personnel of the National Debt Commission, which is outside political control, affords ample guarantee to British investors that they will receive equitable treatment as regards repurchases on the London market." We should hope so. Australia has so many maturities in London in the next few years that it cannot afford to treat the London market unfairly.

The idea that Australian borrowers will fly from discontent in the City into the arms of New York financial houses is very much exaggerated. Australia can hardly go to New York for its London conversion loans, and for new money it is doubtful whether it can borrow more cheaply in New York. The Commonwealth Government raised \$75,000,000 of 5 per cent. gold bonds in 1925 at 99½, but these bonds are now standing in New York at 98, whereas the Commonwealth 5 per cent. sterling loan, 1945-75, is quoted in London at 100½. It is reasonable to assume that

as long as the Colonial Stock Acts classify all Australian loans, on the completion of certain formalities, as trustee securities irrespective of their merits, Australia will enjoy artificially good credit in London. Moreover, America does not want Australian goods. The figures published with the recent Commonwealth prospectus showed that whereas imports from America in 1925-26 amounted to £37.4 millions, exports to America were only £12.9 millions. On the other hand, imports from Great Britain were £65.8 millions and exports to Great Britain £61.0 millions—over 40 per cent. of the total Australian export trade. Finally, it appears that the actual costs of issue are lower in London than in New York. For a Colonial loan redeemable within 20 years the stamp duty in London is ½ per cent., and within 40 years 1 per cent. Underwriting commissions may be taken as 1½ per cent. to 1¾ per cent. The total costs in London are, therefore, 2½ per cent. to 2¾ per cent. for loans redeemable within 40 years, or 1½ per cent. to 1¾ per cent. in the case of loans redeemable within 20 years. In New York the costs are from 3 per cent. to 3½ per cent. New South Wales, which raised \$25,000,000 of 5 per cent. stock not long ago in New York at 96½, is said to have received only 98½. And in addition it had to agree to a Sinking Fund sufficient to redeem one-half the issue by 1957. Commissions are bound to be higher in New York when the issuing house may be sub-selling to other financial houses which all employ the travelling bond salesman, who all have to be paid. To place a new stock in the hands of the investing public in Great Britain is a direct affair. In America it is a tortuous affair, passing through several stages before it reaches even the bonds salesman who canvasses the public. Of course, New York may occasionally or temporarily outbid London if money rates in America fall still further or if the competition between American issuing houses becomes still more intense. But that may be a relief to the London market, seeing that the nation's surplus for overseas lending has been seriously diminished.

IN THE NATION of October 9th last we referred to Central Provinces Manganese Ore as being one of the companies indirectly affected by the coal strike, although we did not suggest that dividend distributions were in danger of being reduced. The report for the year ending December 31st shows that trading profits at £259,784 were £165,956 less than in the previous year. Dividends were maintained at 30 per cent. tax free. The financial position remains extremely strong. With the appropriation of £19,197, the reserve account is brought up to £160,000, against an issued capital of £750,000. Investments at cost amount to £698,932, exclusive of the investment (£25,000 at present) in the new subsidiary, the United Kingdom Ferro-Manganese Company, which is owned half by the Central Provinces and half by four iron and steel companies. The capital of the Ferro-Manganese Company is £350,000 divided into £50,000 ordinary and £300,000 6 per cent. preference shares, of which the ordinary shares were allotted fully paid, half to the Central Provinces and half to the iron and steel companies. The Chairman, at the general meeting of Central Provinces, stated that the current year's accounts would be satisfactory, although prices of manganese ore were lower than they were in 1924 and 1925. A large proportion of the Company's production has already been sold. The first shipment to the Ferro-Manganese Company was made in January. This subsidiary provides a fixed outlet for a large part of the Central Provinces production as well as remunerative employment for a part of the Company's surplus funds. The main activity in Central Provinces shares usually develops at dividend times, and quiescence usually reigns after the general meeting. If any substantial reaction occurs in the shares in the next few months they might be bought. At the present price of 6½ cum div. the shares yield £4 16s. per cent. free of tax or £6 per cent. gross.

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